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WORLD SOCCER

EUROPE'S AUGUST FIXTURES

SPOTLIGHT ON
SCHILLACI

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VASCO DA GAMA

World Cup post mortem
Where Brazil went wrong
West Germany's new boss
ENGLAND and SCOTLAND
New season – new starts
Brian Glanville

Americans may get 32-team World Cup

BY KEIR RADNEDGE

A SHOCK move to 32 teams could be on the cards for the 1994 World Cup finals in the United States.

FIFA's executive meets in December to consider the lessons of Italia '90 and proposals from president Joao Havelange to amend the qualification system to provide greater representation at the finals for Africa.

But Havelange's proposals are certain to upset the financially all-powerful European federations. They are resigned to losing one place at the finals with the United States taking over the Italian hosts' role. But Havelange has clearly signalled in interviews that he expects Europe to give up one more place to allow in a third African nation.

This proposal will upset not only Europe but Africa, whose nations and confederation believe – particularly after Cameroon's progress in Italy – that they should be guaranteed at least four places in the United States in four year's time.

Challenge

An increase in numbers is NOT on the cards for Asia or Central and North America. But Havelange will suggest increasing the number of inter-continental play-offs to give Asian and perhaps CONCACAF nations a chance to challenge European and South American sides for places at the finals.

Grounds for compromise look few and far between. Europe will not want to concede more ground to other continents but, clearly, rising standards elsewhere deserve an opportunity on the world stage.

This is one reason why expanding the finals to 32 teams may yet make sense. Two more reasons concern the American hosts. They have 27 possible venues and, for the sake of publicity and promotions, need to throw the World Cup net as far as they can. So far US '90 chief Scott LeTellier has talked cautiously of a possible 12 sites. But if the Americans really want to 'sell' the World Cup as widely as possible then a 32-team competition, with eight groups of four teams, would not go amiss.

The other important American reason concerns that vast continent's four time zones. The present structure of the World Cup finals provides for six first-round groups with the top two in each group plus the four third-placed teams with the best records all going into the 16-team knock-out stages.

This is totally contrived. But, more than that, it encourages – and positively rewards – negative football. Everyone started Italia '90 knowing that three draws would ensure a place in the second round. That led to a further slump in scoring rates and some of the most tedious of World Cup football. It also encouraged the sort of negative thinking which Argentina, for example, carried with them throughout the finals.

Clearly it would be unfair to force a third-placed team in Los Angeles to fly back through the clock to Miami for their second-round tie. They would be at a disastrous disadvantage. A format of eight groups of four would, however, allow for a structured knock-out formula in which no team had to cross more than one time zone per match.

Finally, more than that, such a formula would encourage positive football in the groups. Just the top two teams would qualify. Therefore, teams would be under much more pressure to go out to win their games. Only that way could they ensure progress.

The Americans have said they have no wish to tamper with the Laws of the Game. But the organisation of the finals is another matter. A 32-team finals may sound horribly overblown to many observers and fans. But FIFA and the Americans may discover in their discussions over the next months and years that, if they want the best for the 1994 World Cup, they could do worse.

Eric Wynalda in World Cup action for the United States against Czechoslovakia's Ivan Hasek.

Enlarging the finals could suit hosts and head off major row with Europe

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GERMANY UNIFICATION ANGERS EURO RIVALS

BY ERIC BATTY

BELGIUM, Wales and Luxembourg are all angry over the impending, late withdrawal of East Germany from the 1992 European championship qualifiers.

Political progress towards unification of the two Germanys is proceeding so fast that the East German league will, to all effects, be relegated to history next year when this season's top two clubs join the West German Bundesliga.

Many East German coaches and officials feel they are getting the worst end of the deal. But that is no consolation for the Belgian, Welsh and Luxembourg federations who feel they are being 'robbed' by the disappearance of East Germany.

Belgium had expected to play East Germany next month in the European qualifiers and had arranged a warm-up friendly deliberately to prepare. Live TV screenings of the East Germany match had also been arranged and many tickets sold.

Belgian federation secretary Alain Courtois estimates the Belgians will lose more than £400,000 in lost receipts and blames UEFA for not keeping his federation sufficiently well-informed of merger plans.

The Welsh believe that losing the East Germany home fixture could cost them 200,000. They may join the Belgians in a joint protest and compensation claim.

Soccer's other big names

BY JANE NOTTAGE

THE Swiss-based consultants ISL Marketing are responsible for co-ordinating the activities of all the major World Cup sponsors.

But how did they contribute to the 1990 event? Stephen Dixon, ISL Marketing's vice-president was the man in charge of ensuring that Coca-Cola and the rest obtained maximum 'visible' return for their multi-million investment

How difficult was it to get ten of the world's biggest companies together for a major world event?

"Extremely difficult, mainly because they all had different needs and aspirations. Some of the companies are very independent,others need a lot of guidance. We had Coca-Cola, Philips, JVC, Canon, the Italian Ministry of Agriculture which promoted specifically Spumante and wines of Italy, Fuji, Carlsberg, Gillette and two new boys in Mars and Alfa-Romeo.

"Mars had been interested for some time in using sports sponsorship as a vehicle for the promotion of their goods. Basically, they wanted to achieve nutritional credibility for Mars as part of a healthy diet. They spent £7.5 million on the World Cup and their activities included advertising in the stadia and in the programme. They also had product exclusivity and access to tickets an extremely important aspect if you consider that the tickets were nearly sold out, and requests for tickets for the Final were six times the capacity of the Olympia stadium!"

What about Alfa Romeo?

"Alfa Romeo took space on the 'centreline' board, which enabled the millions of TV viewers to see their name. Also being Italian, they were very involved in a number of initiatives including the launch of a new car to celebrate their participation in the World Cup."

Did each company have a specific development?

Plastic first

"Yes, take Coca-Cola for example. Due to security needs in the stadia Coca-Cola produced plastic bottles and sold their product without the tops. I believe this was a 'first' at a sporting event."

What initiatives did the other sponsors take?

"Fuji provided a fast developing service for all accredited photographers at the stadia, Philips provided all the stadia lighting equipment, Gillette used the occasion to launch a new shaving system while Canon and JVC were supplying equipment."

How did you co-ordinate all this?

"We hold workshops for the sponsors in various cities of the world, so that they can all get together, exchange views, bounce ideas off each other and use our experience to get promotion and advertising ideas."

Mars spent over £7m on Italia 90.

Baggio tops transfer spiral

ROBERTO Baggio's £8 million move from Fiorentina to Juventus set a world record and was the major action of the summer 'transfer season.' Other top deals included:

Thomas HASSLER. Koln to Juventus Karl-Heinz RIEDLE. . Werder Bremen to Lazio Enzo FRANCESCOLI. Marseille to Cagliari Dragan STOJKOVIC Red Star to Marseille Mark HATELEY Monaco to Rangers Ezidio NETO . Palmeiras to Napoli JULIO CESAR. . Montpellier to Juventus Predrag SPASIC. . . . . Partizan to Real Madrid Francisco VILLAROYA . . . . Zaragoza to Real Madrid Rafael MARTIN VAZQUEZ Real Madrid to Torino Claudio TAFFAREL Internacional to Parma Gheorghe POPESCU . . . Craiova to PSV Eindhoven Flemming POVLSEN . PSV Eindhoven to Borussia Dortmund Wim KIEFT. PSV to Bordeaux Stephane PAILLE . . Bordeaux to Porto Rui AGUAS . Porto to Benfica Georges GRUN . . . Anderlecht to Parma Stephane DEMOL . . . . . Porto to Toulouse Eric CANTONA. . Montpellier to Marseille Jan STEJSKAL Sparta Praha to QPR Brian LAUDRUP Uerdingen to Bayern Munich Louis M'FEDE. Canon Yaounde to Figueras Hugo MARADONA . . . . . Rayo Vallecano to Rapid Vienna Tomas SKUHRAVY . . . . . Sparta Praha to Genoa

ALL CHANGE

THE OFFSIDE law has changed. Since July 29 a player is still onside if he is IN LINE with the penultimate defender. It's a switch by the International Board which could backfire, since it will mean many managers and coaches scrapping zone tactics and reverting to static sweeper systems.

More sensibly, the 'professional' foul – halting by unfair means a player heading for goal – will be a sending-off offence. And a player will be sent off even if the punishment within the Laws is a penalty.

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Editor
KEIR RADNEDGE
Managing Editor
PETER STEWART
Group Art Editor
STAN McDONALD
Editorial
071 261 5737
Advertisement Manager
TONY LONG
Advertising
071-261 5702
Fax
071-261 6019
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King's Reach Tower
Stamford Street
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KEIR RADNEDGE reviews the good, the bad and the ugly of the 1990 World Cup

REFEREEING REVOLUTION IS THE PRIORITY FOR '94

FIFA must scrap their present organisation of World Cup referees. A failure to do so will further undermine not only the credibility of the now-notorious referees' committee but will undermine confidence in FIFA itself.

General secretary Sepp Blatter – the one obvious candidate to succeed Joao Havelange when he steps down as president in 1994 – made refereeing standards a personal crusade in Italy.

He wants to see professional referees introduced in the major soccer nations and he wants to amend the present selection and administration procedures.

But World Cup refereeing needs more than mere evolutionary amendment. It needs a revolution.

By putting so much store by firm discipline long before the finals began, FIFA stepped up the pressure on their referees and laid them wide open to all the criticism which followed.

Some of the most explosive came from Blatter himself in a most odd incident. He gave an interview to West German TV in which he criticised the initial performances of the Soviet referee Alexei Spirin, the Italian Luigi Agnolin and the Swede, Erik Fredriksson. Blatter – perhaps to play fair with TV? – repeated his criticisms on Italian TV. It was like attacking the royal family, since referees are not permitted to make any but the most anodyne comments and could not hit back.

Italy's best

Subsequently Agnolin and Co got their marching orders when the refereeing list was reduced after the second round matches. But, by cutting out all referees from countries still involved, FIFA left themselves badly short of experienced men.

Frenchman Michel Vautrot and Joel Quinou, the Brazilian Jose Roberto Wright – in my view the best referee at the finals – and the highly-rated young Dane, Peter Mikkelsen, all survived. So did the Austrian Helmut Kohl, only to rule himself out of further selection after his bizarre expulsion of Czechoslovakia's one-boot Lubomir Moravcik against West Germany in the quarter-finals.

After Brazilian referees for the Final of 1982 and the Final of 1986, there was little chance of Wright landing the plum this time. Instead, he took the semi-final between England and West Germany and was involved in the most remarkable row with Quiniou, his senior linesman.

Several times Quiniou flagged to draw Wright's attention to fouls committed in front of him. Twice Wright, clearly furious, ran across, gesturing loud and clear: "I'm the man in charge. Keep your flag for offsides." Speculation is that this very public dust-up cost Quiniou an apparently cast-iron certain chance of refereeing the Final.

Instead the Big Match went to Uruguayan-born Mexican, Edgardo Codesal Mendez. Hardly a surprise, since his father-in-law, Javier Arriaga, is a member of FIFA's referees' committee. That such a family connection should have been allowed by FIFA was a scandal in itself. Codesal Mendez was far from being the best, or most experienced, referee at the 1990 finals. Obviously, he had other factors in his favour.

After the Final, in which he made history with two expulsions and provided West Germany's winner with a controversial penalty, Codesal Mendez said he was retiring from refereeing. He said: "My father (a referee at the 1966 World Cup) always told me to quit at the top. You can go no higher than the World Cup Final. For me, that is enough."

If Codesal Mendez proved a poor choice – one clear penalty refused after a trip by Goycochea on Augenthaler, one 'non-existent' penalty given for a challenge by Sensini on Voller – Quiniou was equally disastrous at the Third Place Match. But in one way Quiniou was a victim of the most incontrovertibly appalling aspect of World Cup refereeing: the linesmen.

How can top-class referees, who have not the run the line for years, suddenly revert to the flag for such important matches? How can a referee work in confidence, knowing that he has two rusty linesmen on duty? How can a referee work in security, knowing that his linesmen are his RIVALS to referee big matches further on down the tournament?

Awful decisions

There were some truly awful offside decisions taken by linesmen – culminating in the most farcical of all. That was in the third place match when Nicola Berti ran beyond a line of four England defenders – all in front of him when the pass was played – to head home. Incredibly the inept linesman, Hansal, flagged for offside.

Let's hope he is never again seen at international competition level, save as a spectator. Let's also hope that FIFA, in 1994, make sure each referee has two 'real' linesmen at his side. Secondly, isn't it about time referees were as free as managers and players to talk about a game. Democracy and free speech are not just for eastern Europe.

I believe that the general overall standard of refereeing has improved. That is, referees from South America, Europe, Africa and Asia are far closer on interpretation than used to be the case.

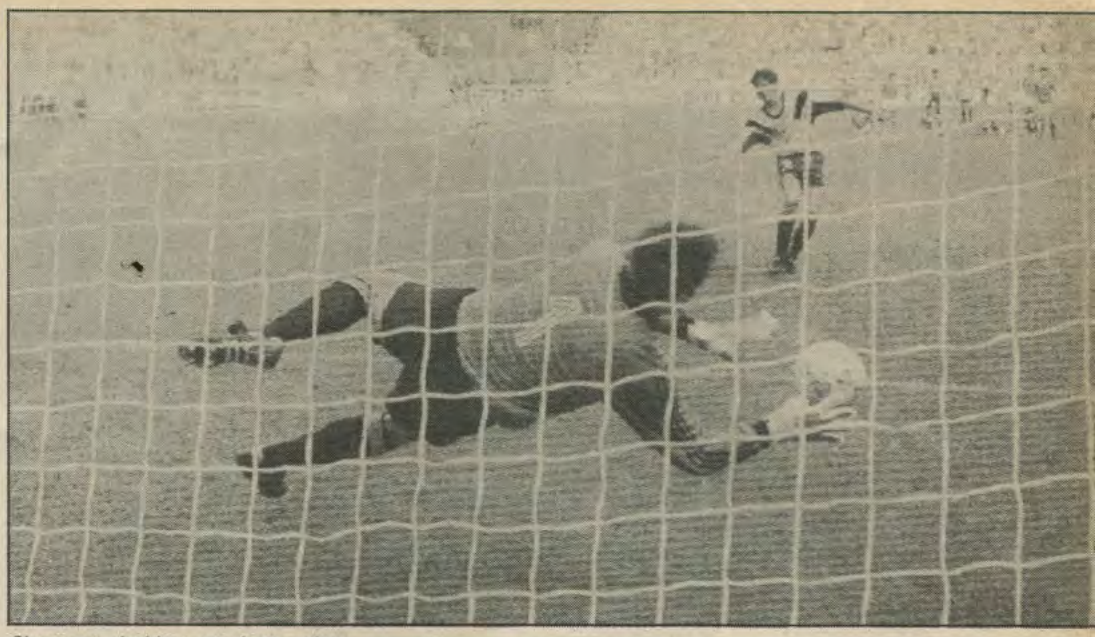
But as for discipline, that's another story. If one team – Argentina, South Korea, Cameroon were clear examples at varying times in the finals – are determined to push and pull the Laws of the game beyond the bounds of their spirit, there is little even the best referee can do. This is a matter for federations, for managers, for players.

Finally, FIFA must think again about the yellow card system. To ban players for having collected two yellow cards in separate games is to put players too much at the mercy of nervy or inconsistent referees as well as at the mercy of cynical opponents. Perhaps three cards might be a fairer system.

World Cup Final referee Codesal Mendez was far from being the best in Italy.

'Linesmans' system is undermining FIFA's credibility

Costa Rica manager Bora Milutinovic.



Shoot-out deciders are better than some other suggestions.

FOOTBALL

Generally mediocre to poor, with patchy exceptions. West Germany started the finals playing exemplary modern football. Television viewers, force-fed with pictures concentrating on the man on the ball, could have had little idea of how selflessly and intelligently every other team member was moving to present a plethora of options for the player in possession. West Germany's opening exhibition against Yugoslavia was a performance to be savoured. At that moment most of those watching realised that here were the likely eventual victors of the tournament. West Germany and Italy were by far the best football teams at the finals; Brazil and Argentina, in contrasting ways, proved their own worst enemies; England, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Belgium were the best of the rest. Holland's football was disappointingly anonymous; their lack of creative ideas underlined just how important a role Arnold Muhren had played in their 1988 European championship triumph. In terms of quality this was possibly the poorest World Cup since 1966. But, like 1966, there were peaks of high drama which camouflaged the absence of classic football. Soccer grips nations and individuals because it is more than an exercise in sporting theory; soccer can also be an emotional, almost a spiritual, experience. All those who attended the 1990 World Cup, or watched on TV, should be grateful that the one factor made up for the absence of the other.

MANAGERS

The big occasions found out strengths and weaknesses in the national team coaches. Star of them all was Costa Rica's Bora Milutinovic whose team selection, genuine ability to inspire personal loyalty and tactical discipline turned Costa Rica from no-hopers into the real surprises of the finals. Costa Rica were far more of a surprise, for example, than Cameroon whose ruthlessly-attained successes will not have surprised readers of this magazine. Bobby Robson, almost despite himself, proved one of the great managerial successes of the finals. And Argentina's Carlos Bilardo worked some sort of miracle bringing an out-of-form mixture of good and hardly mediocre players through to the Final. Robson, however, also featured among a catalogue of managers whose decision-making almost defied belief. These were the men who, after one bad result, threw four years' work out of the window and gambled recklessly on tactics or players they had never seriously considered during that long spring which was supposed to be about World Cup 'warm-up' or 'preparation' work.

Robson, after the appalling start against the Irish (not necessarily his fault), suddenly switched to a sweeper system which is not only alien to the England team but alien to most of English football. Similarly Soviet boss Valeri Lobanovsky, panicked by defeat against Romania, suddenly threw overboard key men such as Rinat Dasayev and Gennadi Litovchenko whose experience under pressure should have been vital. Hardly surprising, then, that the Soviets caught the first flight home.

PENALTY SHOOT-OUTS

This is the aspect of the finals which provoked the biggest response in terms of readers letters. First it has to be said: in a time-tight competition such as the World Cup some sudden-death system is necessary. Fans and players and commentators must be practical. Penalties are clearly better than toss of a coin and ideas such as corner-count or previous match-record are deceptively appealing. The truth is that both would, at one stage or another, provide a team with a built-in reason to play for a draw. The only alternative which provides for a decision on the day is to play on until a goal is scored. Clearly this would have repercussions in terms of fitness for further matches. But that could be allayed by allowing use of one (or more) further substitutes(s) once the match has run into time-after-time. As for concern over disruption to TV schedules, extra-time and penalty shoot-outs manage that already and none of the broadcasters complained. After all, they are getting live drama for the money!

Lothar Matthaus: the most consistent player in the Finals.

STARS

One of the major disappointments of these finals – one which left a void – was the absence of an individual who dominated the tournament as Diego Maradona had in 1986 (or Cruyff in 1974, Pele in 1970, etc). West German skipper Lothar Matthaus was the most consistent all-rounder on view and the best single individual performance was by Jurgen Klinsmann against Holland. Maradona complained that players could not give their best because most were tired at the end of a long, hard European season. Maybe the World Cup finals should be moved to September, he thought. Maradona's suggestion received short shrift from FIFA president Joao Havelange but it was not so silly. Now, more than ever before, the vast majority of World Cup players are European-based. As the European Community legislation breaks down employment barriers, so the numbers of European-based players involved in the finals will increase – with still more Brazilians and Argentines and Uruguayans playing in Europe. Schillaci was awarded the Golden Ball as best player in the finals on a vote of journalists. But, given the natural preponderance of Italian journalists, that was hardlky surprising. To suggest, however, that Schillaci is anywhere even in the class of a Matthaus or a Gullit is sacrilege.

TURN OVER

TACTICS

NO major developments. Most teams played familiar schemes and shapes of the 4-4-2 or 3-5-2 or 4-5-1 variety. No-one used a sweeper who was wholly static behind defence and it was noticeable that defences in general played up much tighter to midfield. This had the effect of improving the effectiveness of 'pressing' tactics – controlling the play as far upfield as possible and thus protecting your own goal by distance – as well as squeezing the life out of opposition strikers. In an ironic way this made the Irish Republic one of the more tactically pragmatic sides at the finals: recognising the problems of going through defences they brazenly set out to go over the top and Italy could testify to the problems involved in coping. The change in the offside rule setting an attacker onside if he is in line with the penultimate defender will encourage more teams to follow the Irish lead. After all, in effect, attackers have been given an extra half-a-yard start. The other answer to this more sophisticated 'team defence' system was demonstrated by a number of countries who used their strikers to hold the ball up for their midfielders to provide the main thrust at goal.

West Germany had the best of both worlds. Klinsmann and Voller were attackers who could both strike for goal themselves or pull holes in defences for the likes of Matthaus and Littbarski to exploit. This World Cup also witnessed the developing use of the 'advanced defender.' Holland v West Germany provided a superb example. Midway through the second half German left back Andy Brehme said to Dutch winger John Van't Schip: "Why are you following me around all the time? Why don't you play your own game?" Van't Schip replied: "These are my orders." Van't Schip may not be the world's greatest winger but surely using him to mark Brehme was a tactical waste and one of the most negative ploys displayed at Italia '90.

TECHNIQUE

A generally high level was maintained with even minnows such as Costa Rica and the United Arab Emirates displaying a high level of skill both in terms of individual control and passing. Brazil, as ever, were the most outstanding team in terms of technique. But they dissipated much of their advantage with tactics which demanded unusually high physical commitment from their forwards. Brazil's strength has always been that the ball could be played to feet in the tightest of situations in complete confidence that the receiver had the skill and ability to wriggle free. By asking Careca and Muller to run around (like Voller and Klinsmann) the Brazilians wasted their natural talents. Furthermore, because Brazil used only three midfielders the level of support for Careca and Muller was barely sufficient against eight-man defences. Brazil were not unlucky to lose to Argentina; they were lucky earlier to have found Sweden too lackadaisical and Scotland ready to play for time far too early.

One must also seriously question the FIFA habit of using a newly-designed Adidas match ball for each succeeding World Cup. To appear at their best players need to use the footballs with which they are familiar. It is cheating the public to expect players to adapt to a new-style football in a matter of days. A far better solution would be for FIFA to designate one (or two or three) official international match balls one year before the World Cup. These could then be used around the world in international and domestic competition. Players would then not waste valuable resources of energy and concentration miscueing free kicks, corners and passes in general (and whichever company got the contract would have even longer to promote their product).

To use one standard ball for the World Cup finals is fine but FIFA must give players much greater opportunities to gain confidence in the ball. The near-disappearance of goals from direct free kicks perhaps demonstrated a lack of confidence in the basic tool of the game.

The talents of Careca and Muller were wasted by Brazil.

TELEVISION

The World Cup is all about television. It is the guarantee of global transmission which persuades sponsors to invest their millions of pounds in the event. The Italian camera work and direction provoked mixed reactions. British viewers used to a lot of player close-ups either hated the more panoramic style of Italian direction or welcomed the opportunity to see more of the game as it unfolded. The action replays worked well and technological developments such as the Telebeam – calculating distance of shots and power – had its uses. Italian television, with its plethora of commercial competitors, provided wall-to-wall coverage of the finals. Sometimes there were up to 20 programmes a day built around the World Cup. Many of these were discussion programmes which reached a level never even approached in the UK. At the start of the finals, for instance, one channel brought along the three top Italian soccer surgeons and used an invited audience of fans, players and coaches to question them about injuries. The impression from the Italian domestic programmes was that the Italian fan is much better educated about soccer than many European counterparts. One reason is probably the fact that transfers are forbidden during the season. Much of the soccer publicity generated elsewhere concerns transfers. The Italians, instead, have to concentrate on the football itself. Discussions of tactical nuances were commonplace. Italian players, as well, contributed a great deal. Instead of providing defensive, monosyllabic answers to questions they talked freely and intelligently about the game, their role, their team, team-mates and the opposition. There was plenty which British television might usefully consider taking on board ... and engage a sports presenter from Tele Monte Carlo named Alba Parietti. She possesses assets with which Desmond Lynam, Bob Wilson and Co just cannot compete!

Luca Di Montemezolo, head of Italia 90, was a brillant host.

THE HOSTS

Only a brief comment and one which has been stated many times before. Italy, thanks to the brilliant directorship of Luca di Montezemolo, were superb hosts. The organisation was excellent and, even where systems had not been completed in time, the Italians were always ready with a contingency operation. Travel and hotel facilities were up to the mark – except in Turin for the semi-final – and the stadia were breath-taking. The entire country 'lived' the World Cup and made the event itself a huge festival. Pity the teams could not respond with better football.

THE POLITICS

Joao Havelange says that, after 20 years, he will stand down as president in 1994 because "I do not want to have to be carried into the stadia." Who is in line as successor? Secretary Sepp Blatter is the only apparent candidate. None of the African or Asian or South Americans have enough worldwide clout and West German Hermann Neuberger – president of FIFA's own World Cup committee and probably a contender in German eyes – is not a man to command universal support even within his own continent. Blatter has followed the Havelange line on development of the game, of the World Cup and of commercialism within soccer.

One unknown factor in all of this is the Adidas element. The late Horst Dassler, of the sportswear empire's founding family, was virtually the kingmaker for Havelange. It was also Dassler who created the ISL Marketing agency which controls all FIFA and UEFA's commercial rights. Dassler died more than three years ago, however, and the Mr Fix-It void has remained empty. Now that Adidas has been bought, in a deal which was a major surprise, by French multi-millionaire Bernard Tapie (president of Marseille) a major element of uncertainty has been created within the framework of international soccer politics.

One thing, at least, there should now be no doubt about the 1998 World Cup finals being awarded to France.

The French staged what was almost certainly an enormously over-priced 'cocktail party' in Rome to publicise their bid among the media and hangers-on. The vulgarity of it made one's sympathies swing towards the other contenders, Switzerland or Brazil or Morocco.

FOLLOW THE FIXTURES

THE new season is getting under way and World Soccer is there. You will find top European fixtures for the month of August on Pages 60 and 61. World Soccer's major fixtures guide appears in next month's edition – as a special booklet presented FREE with the magazine. The fixtures edition is always a sell-out. Order your copy NOW!

One of the most complete players in the world ... Andy kicked off his career as a five-year-old against Hamburg!

The West German star is so strong going forward ... as Argentina found to their cost in the World Cup Final.

Why Brehme is the star to follow

FROM ARTHUR ROTMIL

EARLY in the second half of West Germany's titanic World Cup clash with Holland, Andy Brehme had a short, sharp conversation with Dutch winger John Van't Schip.

Brehme, the outstanding raiding 'fullback' at Italia '90, said: "Why do you keep following me? Why don't you play your own game."

Van't Schip "These are my orders."

There could have been few greater compliments to the ever-present threat Brehme presents. Hard evidence was duly provided by asuperb goal against the Dutch and then the decisive penalty which earned German glory in the World Cup Final itself against Argentina.

Uncompromising in the tackle, incisive in his interventions, difficult to pass, strong going forward with great vision and a feared specialist at free kicks, struck with accuracy and venom these are qualities which have elevated Brehme to the heights.

Brehme plays his club football with Internazionale and, last year, was voted the best player in Italy. Not Van Basten, not Gullit, not even Maradona, but modest Andy Brehme received most votes from Italian managers and journalists.

Inter coach Giovanni Trapattoni says: "Andreas Brehme is a personality, he has a good eye for the game and is technically strong. His play is very disciplined and like all Germans he always wants to win."

Brehme was born on November 9, 1960 in Hamburg. At four he was introduced to football by his father Bernd, who was then team manager of Barmbek Uhlenhorst. During his formative years mother Waltraud was also ever present, including at the first famous occasion when her five-year-old Andy, as a mascot, kicked off with the legendary Uwe Seller at a friendly against Hamburg.

Brehme says: "My father was constantly behind me. I have him to thank for my development and successful career."

His parents had no objection when at 20, he joined Saarbrucken in South West Germany.

A year later in 1981 he was snapped up by Kaiserslautern and, in February 1984, he made his debut in the national side against Bulgaria in Varna.

Brehme spent 15 years with Barmbek Uhlenhorst (1965-1980), one year Saarbrucken (1980-81) and five years at Kaiserslautern. (1981-1986). By then he became a regular in national colours and celebrated above all runners-up spot in the 1986 World Cup.

But the big turning point in his career came with the move to Bayern Munich in 1986 for 700,000. There he tasted success winning the league championship (1987) and the Super Cup (1987).

When Inter Milan came in for him in 1988, Brehme could not say no. After all, Italy is most Germans' favourite foreign country and the lure of the lire – he now earns three times as much as in Munich – proved equally irristible. While Inter paid 2.5 million for Lothar Matthaus, Brehme cost 'only' 660,000. Yet Brehme's ability to find space is one of the key factors in Matthaus's own success.

Matthaus is a close friend with whom Brehme shares a room at away matches, or in training camps. Soon the "Interisti" realised what a gem they bought relatively cheaply. Matthaus says: "Andy was misunderstood in Munich; he was shoved all over the place. At Inter people understand he can decide matches on his own."

The fans appreciate his spirit and consistency. Brehme says: "That is why the Italians regard Germans so highly, because we never give up."

Brehme, who married his Spanish wife, Pilar, three years ago has no intention of returning to the Bundesliga for a long time yet.

Yet he should not have taken the World Cup-winning penalty in Rome. That he did owed everything to the professionalism of skipper Lothar Matthaus.

Matthaus said, "I should have taken the kick but I had problems with an ankle. You cannot gamble on something as vitally important to the nation as the World Cup Final ... and I knew Andy would not let us down!"

Matthaus is a close friend of Brehme.

SALVATORE SCHILLACI
Aged 25
Born Palermo, December 1, 1964
Clubs: Messina 1982-89, Juventus from 1989.
International debut v Switzerland.
Nine caps.

1st in a great new series

SPOTLIGHT ON TOTO SCHILLACI

The pain and the pride

BY KEIR RADNEDGE

How the six-goal Sicilian made World Cup history

Utter despair as Italy lose to Argentina on penalties.

SALVATORE SCHILLACI'S biggest, toughest and roughest challenge is just about to begin. The little Sicilian with the organ-stop eyes knows it only too well.

'Toto' was thrilled to become an overnight hero at the World Cup, surprised by his top-scoring success and amazed at the instant adulation his six goals inspired.

This time last year he was considered an over-priced item of transfer extravagance by Juventus. Now he is labelled the "New Paolo Rossi", he ranks in soccer history alongside Just Fontaine, Sandor Kocsis, Eusebio and Gary Lineker and anything less than a flurry of goals in the league this autumn will be considered abject failure.

Not that Schillaci is an innocent in Calcio. He will be kicked and buffeted all round the penalty boxes of Italy this coming season. But Schillaci has few illusions. He knows just how fickle the game can be.

Only a few weeks before all Italy was hailing his World Cup goals, only police action saved him from being dragged from his embattled car as he drove up to Coverciano to begin World Cup preparation.

Local 'fans' from Fiorentina were furious that their golden boy, Roberto Baggio, had just been sold to Schillaci's Juventus; they believed the deal had been part of some surreptitious plot to help sell Fiorentina down the UEFA Cup Final river to their Turin rivals.

Schillaci told me later: "I am not embarrassed to admit that I was frightened. Soccer excites such passion. The fans pay for their tickets to the stadia. They have a right to shout whatever they like at the matches. But we are only players. Why do they behave like that in the middle of the week, after the end of the season, when we are about to work for the World Cup? I still do not understand. But maybe I have learned a lesson."

Italian state President Francesco Cossiga was fascinated by Schillaci's eyes which appeared on the verge of popping out of his head when he celebrated his goals against Austria, Czechoslovakia, Uruguay, the Irish Republic, Argentina and England.

Schillaci told him: "I don't know why my eyes look like that in the pictures or on television. But it's all right, Mr President – they go back to normal after a match!"

In truth, away from the penalty box, back on the training ground, in the team hotel or on the team bus, Schillaci's eyes contain far more suspicion than charisma. Then you see, not the wealthy modern hero but the unmistakable ghost of the boy from the the deep south, from the wrong side of the tracks.

Schillaci will never lose the essence of his character. Just as Diego Maradona, multi-millionaire and jet-set superstar, will always be the street urchin from Buenos Aires.

Schillaci squeezed into one of the last remaining gaps in Italy's World Cup squad, having made his Azzurri debut earlier this spring against Switzerland. But anyone who thought he was there merely for the ride was not listening closely enough.

The day before the World Cup finals began Giampiero Boniperti, recently-departed president of Juventus who then became the national team's World Cup delegation chief, told anyone who cared to hear: "We need another Rossi. But have you seen Schillaci? He's become a sort of favourite kid brother with the other players. Keep an eye on him..."

That was a piece of advice Austria failed to hear or heed. Schillaci appeared as a second-half substitute for the luckless, off-target Andrea Carnevale and, three minutes later, headed the decisive goal.

Schillaci says: "It was like a miracle. Vialli deserves the credit. It was a great cross. I threw myself forward. I thought I might get to the ball with my knee, or my chest or my back. The last thing I expected to get my head to it with two of those enormous Austrian defenders there.

"And I had thought I was not going to get a game. Vicini told me to warm up. But then Baresi was injured and I thought: He'll put on Vierchowod and then he won't dare use another substitute. I've lost my chance. But then Baresi signalled the bench that he was OK – and I was on!"

A custom, particularly in soccer's Latin countries, is for a player to "dedicate" his goals – as if he is a pagan priest offering a sacrifice or a matador, dedicating to some aficionada the killing of the bull.

Schillaci is no exception. His goals are generally for his family. But the goal against Austria was a special one indeed. Schillaci says: "I wanted to dedicate the goal to everyone but in the end I realised there were special people: all my friends and neighbours where I was born and brought up in Palermo and then to my wife who was expecting our second child any day."

Schillaci's home city of Palermo went collectively wild as soon as the match had ended. And Schillaci's parents, Domenico and Giovanna, who had gone away for a quiet weekend (!) raced home to join the celebrations – Domenico being carried shoulder-high through the streets by friends, relations and neighbours.

The Schillaci home was besieged by well-wishers and his parents, sister Rosalia and brothers Giovanni and Giuseppe, all appeared on a first-floor balcony to wave regally to the crowds in the street below. Across the city a printing company worked through the night stamping a photograph of Schillaci on hundreds of Italian flags.

A dream

Domenico was as amazed as his son, saying: "I always knew he had football in the blood. But in one year – from the second division with Messina to Juventus, then the Italian cup, the UEFA Cup, the national team, the World Cup. It's a dream."

Wife Rita was in hospital in Turin, able to share her husband's delight only via the telephone. Schillaci, cut off from his team-mates by the media cavalcade, was left little option but to tell the story of his career, step by step.

"I suppose I was already a professional footballer when I was 13. I played for a little club in Palermo and they paid me £25 a month. Then, when I was 17, Messina bought me for £6,000. They paid me £125 a month and I thought I was rich. Later Juventus came for me. Do you know that Boniperti is my No 1 fan? When he signed me, he said: We wanted you because you have what it takes to become an ideal centre-forward for Juventus..."

Boniperti had considered Schillaci a year earlier. But Juve owner Gianni Agnelli took a year to convince.

Even then Messina president Salvatore Massimino proved reluctant to sell until Juventus upped their offer to £3.5million. Then he told Boniperti: "One more condition. I will sell Schillaci only on the condition that you keep him. Don't dare sell him to anyone else!"

Schillaci's first goal for Juventus had been against the United States, in a tournaent last summer in Los Angeles.

His appearance as substitute for Italy against the Americans in the World Cup was initially so well rewarded.

But, more important, in those 39 minutes of the second half Schillaci did enough to earn a place in the starting line-up for the Italians' third game, against Czechoslovakia.

Nine minutes into the game and it was Schillaci who opened the scoring. He might have had a penalty later but the flamoyance of his fall persuaded referee Quiniou to turn a blind eye.

By now Schillaci's wife had given birth to their son, Mattia, and it was to the latest Schillaci that this goal was, of course, dedicated.

Was Schillaci envious that one of the United Arab Emirates players had been being given a Rolls-Royce as bonus for scoring against West Germany? He replied: "Envious? Jealous? Certainly not. Give me the glory any day!"

There was plenty more glory. Schillaci scored the 65th-minute breakthrough goal against Uruguay in the second round; he scored the lone decider after 37 minutes of the quarter-final against the Irish Republic; and he snapped up a rebound for the 17th-minute goal which sent Italy into the semi-final lead against Argentina.

But, with cruel timing, fatigue and a muscle strain began to wear Schillaci down. Unusually he was several times caught wearily offside. And, when it came to the penalty shoot-out, Vicini did not think Schillaci fit enough to take a kick.

Certainly he could not have achieved less than luckless Roberto Donadoni or Aldo Serena. But that is history.

In the shattering aftermath Schillaci recalled his stock reply to all the earlier flattery: "I'm not Paolo Rossi. Maybe I'm the same height and maybe I've got similar acceleration. But that's all. He was one of the greats. He won the World Cup..."

That dream was, for now at least, denied Schillaci. He says: "After we lost to Argentina I was devastated. I wanted to go away and hide. I did not want to think about football, let alone the Third Place Match."

But it was the 'finalina' against England which, of course, established Schillaci's place in the history book. He pulled himself together, created Roberto Baggio's controversial first Italy goal then struck the winner himself from, ironically, the penalty spot.

Not that Schillaci was first-choice to take the penalty. Baggio had been singled out by Vicini in training. But when referee Quiniou pointed to the spot after Schillaci himself had been tripped by Paul Parker, Baggio said: "Toto, you take it. I want you to be the top scorer."

That was goal No 6, lifting Schillaci clear of five-goal Tomas Skuhravy. And that mutual respect and understanding between Schillaci and Baggio could augur remarkable things for Juventus this term.

In all competitions last season Schillci was the top goalscorer in Italy, with 27 goals compared with Marco Van Basten's 26 – and the Dutchman converted nine penalties, Schillaci only two. But still Schillaci says: "If I could have swapped all my goals for a World Cup-winner's medal I would gladly have done so. The Final, between Argentina and West Germany, didn't interest me in the slightest. We, Italy, should have been there. It was unjust. How can a team not lose one game, yet finish third?."

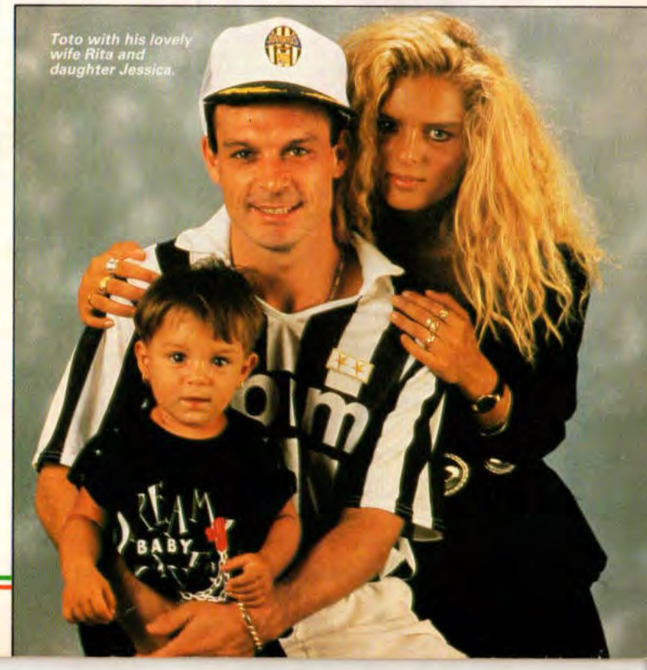
Then, at last, it was home in triumph to Palermo, to Rita and his children Jessica and Mattia.

That's the journey Schillaci says he will take when the great dream finally comes to an end. He will go home to Palermo for good.

He says: "There are so many problems in the south. But there are problems in other cities, too. There's the violence; there's not enough space for the children; there's not enough work.

"But I love Palermo. I'm proud of the place and I'm proud it's my real home. I've got everything I could need in Turin. But not my country; not my friends; not the sea. You know, I've no wish to leave Juventus, ever. Not if Real Madrid offered to make me a multi-millionaire. But I'd love nothing better than to see the Palermo club back in the first division.

"So, when I've finished with football I'll go back to live in Palermo. It's my city, my people ... my home."



Toto with his lovely wife Rita and daughter Jessica.

Klinsmann goes for goal against Holland.

New world champions re-write the record books

Captain Matthaus, the driving dynamo behind the World Cup winners.

WEST GERMANY, rated by most experts as the best team in the tournament, deservedly won the World Cup after outplaying Argentina in the final and thus avenging their defeat against the same South Americans in the Final four years ago.

The Germans were the best organised, the most efficient and impressive side in the competition. It was also a personal triumph for departing manager Franz Beckenbauer, who became the first in history to win the world championship as player, captain and now manager.

Brazil's Mario Zagalo also won the trophy as player and coach, but was not captain.

In the process the West Germans proved themselves the most successful nation in history, having pulled level with Brazil and Italy as thrice winners, but also establishing several more records.

They played 68 matches in the finals, overall 112 in qualifying and finals' competition, scored most goals (290) and more wins than anybody (74). Their ninth appearance in a semi-final and sixth in the final are also records, as was their third consecutive appearance in the Final. With 15 goals the Germans hit more than any among the 24 participants in 'Italia '90.

They played with a sweeper (Augenthaler), and two markers (Kohler and Buchwald), at the back, while the full backs (Berthold, or Reuter and Brehme) often strengthened the midfield by advancing into attacking positions. Buchwald was a revelation with his sudden sorties up field and with any luck might have scored a goal or two. Beckenbauer rated him his No 1 player. Up front two strikers (Voller and Klinsmann) were used, with Riedle in reserve.

Inevitably, comparisons are drawn between the present side and those great German teams also successful in the past. Bearing in mind that football has changed enormously in the past four decades, it would be correct to say that this squad is technically superior to Germany's first World Cup winners in 1954, probably better than their European champions of 1980 and certainly the best side since Beckenbauer took over in 1984.

But this team is not as strong as the class of 1972-74 which became European and World champions. They had several world class players then and personalities such as Beckenbauer an inimitable 'libero', keeper Sepp Maier, defenders Berti Vogts and Paul Breitner, stylish schemers in Wolfgang Overath, Gunter Netzer and Uli Hoeness, plus of course Gerd Muller, next to the Brazilian Pele as most prolific striker in history.

Current stars are captain Lothar Matthaus the driving dynamo, Andy Brehme, easily the top full back in the World Cup and dangerous strikers Rudi Voller and Jurgen Klinsmann.

The Germans started the tournament with devastating demonstrations of power and pace, over-running Yugoslavia by 4-1 and the United Arab Emirates by 5-1. There followed a hiccup against awkward Colombia (1-1), before the tight second phase match with old adversaries Holland.

But the 2-1 victory was marred by one of the most unsavoury incidents of the tournament. Voller clashed with Frank Rijkaard; both were booked – Voller for protesting. In the next minute, after Voller jumped into the Dutch 'keeper Hans Van Breukelen, Rijkaard pulled the German up by the ear, trod on his toe and spat for the third time.

BY ARTHUR ROTMIL

Voller, unfairly sent off against Holland.

Mystery

He was rightly sent off, but why Voller was also dismissed remained a mystery and enraged the Germans. The DFB lodged an official protest with FIFA, but this was rejected and the centre forward was suspended for the next game against Czechoslovakia.

This the Germans won 1-0, but then came the food scare. The players' fading in the closing stages was put down to them eating too much meat! After the Czechoslovak match team doctor Franz Liesen explained that he had to inject every player with vitamins to redress the balance.

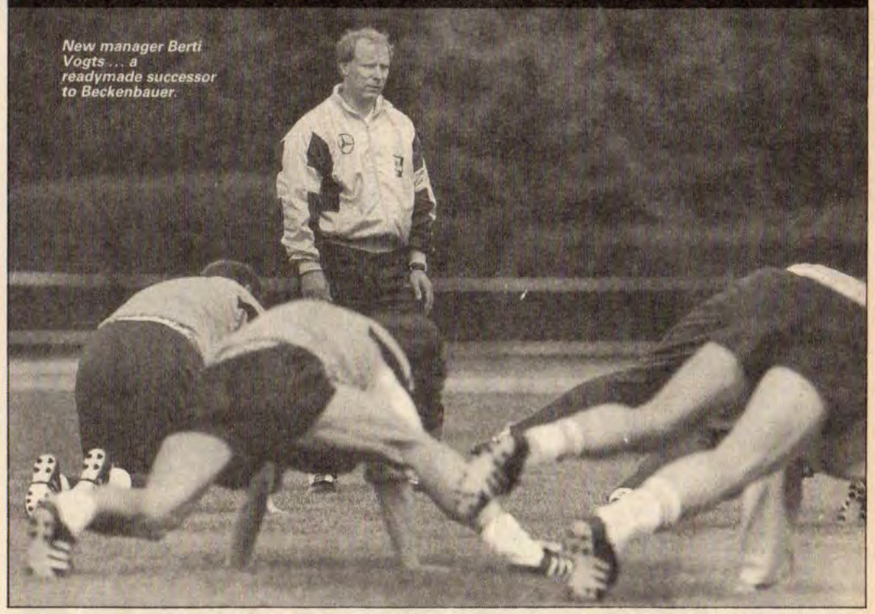
In the semi-final, the Germans gave their least convincing performance of the series, while England played their best match. Nonetheless, the Germans had twice as many shots at goal (22-11) and created the better chances. Some Germans were apprehensive before the penalty shoot-out. England's veteran Peter Shilton was at 40 and with his 124 internationals the most experienced and rated the more reliable custodian than their modest Bodo Illgner, at 23 the youngest 'keeper among the 24 in the World Cup.

Yet, it was Illgner who saved a crucial penalty, while Shilton was comprehensively beaten by each of the four marksmen the Germans used. Injuries to Hassler (thigh and achilles tendon), Littbarski (knee ligaments) and Being (muscle strain), plus one-match bans for Voller and Brehme disrupted some German formations, but did not influence team performances decisively.

"We are going to Italy to win the World Cup", said Beckenbauer before the tournament in what proved to be a prophetic prediction. And the whole German nation, West and East celebrated on a night of glory in Rome.

Berti is a soloist at last

MANAGER PORTRAIT BY ARTHUR ROTMIL



New manager Berti Vogts ... a readymade successor to Beckenbauer.

THE career of Berti Vogts, one of the finest defenders West German football has ever produced, has now reached a glorious climax.

Immediately after the World Cup he took over as arranged from one of his former international partners, Franz Beckenbauer, as national manager. Curiously enough, he had also succeeded Beckenbauer as national captain in 1977.

Yet Vogts was never Beckenbauer's managerial assistant. He has been employed by the DFB (FA) for the past 11 years and until now was in charge of the under-21s as well as all representative teams at various junior levels. Beckenbauer's assistant was for the past two years Holger Osieck, who like his boss is also standing down – he is taking over as team manager at Schalke.

Vogt's new assistant will be his former mate at Borussia Monchengladbach and in the national side, Rainer Bonhof. Nevertheless, Vogts is continuing the tradition of "dynasty", the system of continuity for which the Germans are envied worldwide.

With one exception (Beckenbauer), Germany's national team managers have always been recruited from the DFB's own coaching staff and this trend goes back to the pre-war era. The first national team boss was Prof. Otto Nerz in the 1930s. He was succeeded by his assistant, the venerable Sepp Herberger. He handed over the reins to his right-hand man Helmut Schon, who in turn passed on the responsibility to his lieutenant Jupp Derwall. Beckenbauer was the only one engaged "out of line" of succession. And now Vogts takes over and there couldn't have been a more popular choice.

He looks back on a marvellously successful career as a player having gained 96 caps – only Beckenbauer has more (103).

Hans-Hubert Vogts, the son of a shoemaker, was born on December 30, 1946 in Buttgen. As a nine-year-old he already played for his local club VfR Buttgen with the juniors. Other clubs rejected him later because he was too small.But Berti persevered and despite limited natural talent made the grade through hard work, total commitment and discipline.

Three coaches, Heinz Murach, Dettmar Cramer and Hennes Weisweiler had a decisive influence on his development as a player. Already as a youngster at 13, between 1959 and 1960, he lost both his parents and was raised by his aunt as a church-going Christian and choir boy. He learned the trade of a toolmaker, while coach Murach converted him from a forward to a defender.

Youth side

From the junior ranks Berti made it to the national youth side and played in the UEFA-championships in 1965. Although his favourite club was Fortuna Dusseldorf, he joined Borussia Monchengladbach, then in the Second Division, on the recommendation of Cramer who knew that Weisweiler would make Berti into a complete footballer.

He played in his first Bundesliga match in 1965 and two years later celebrated his international debut against Yugoslavia in Belgrade. After 14 years at 'Gladbach he hung up his boots in 1979 to join the DFB. Having meantime obtained his 'Trainer-Lizenz' (coaching diploma), he was put in charge of the newly created under-21 team.

Vogts was only 5ft 6in yet as a defender he was a symbol of total engagement on the field. As well as 96 caps he won the World Cup, two UEFA-Cup winners mementoes, five West German league championship plaques, one for the DFB-Cup, was voted Footballer of the Year in 1971 and 1979 and played 419 Bundesliga games in which he scored 33 goals.

He was known as a "terrier" for his fierce tackling and played his last international in the 1978 World Cup in Argentina in that 2-3 defeat by Austria.

Now he has reached the pinnacle of his career. His engagement was greeted with almost unanimous delight. His appointment was logical, moreover as the vast majority of the national squad's players have graduated through the under-21, or youth side, which Berti controlled. Of the first choice players only sweeper Klaus Augenthaler was not his "pupil". Not surprisingly all the internationals are solidly behind Vogts.

His first practical co-operation with Beckenbauer took place during the World Cup, in Italy. Berti, sitting in the stand and with better overall dimensional vision, transmitted hisobservations to Franz by walkie-talkie! Typical of the Germans, nothing was left to chance. And Vogts was also used spying out the next opposition.

Now he insists that all decisions will in future be left to him, that nobody will interfere with his work. He has changed enormously in character over the years. Through intensive reading and travel he has widened his horizons. In Ireland he observed pure nature; in South America he crossed the continent in the Andes railway and in Alaska, equipped with a rucksack and camping utensils, he studied the natives. He has become interested in the environment and human life and supports the "Greens" in their call to save nature.

Berti and wife Monika, a former air hostess, have a two-year-old son Justin-Peter.

He is as conscientious in his chosen profession as he was as a player and West German football can be thankful to have such a readymade successor to take the helm of the national side.

Time the refs had TV on their side

Nick Bidwell is sure the use of high-tech would ease the pressure on top refs who get a split-second to make vital decisions.

Referee Fredriksson gives Maradona the yellow card in the match against the Soviet Union.

ERIK FREDRIKSSON, top Swedish referee left the World Cup under a cloud for failing to spot Diego Maradona handling a goal-bound header under his nose against the Soviet Union.

Juan Cardellino of Uruguay also left under a cloud for awarding a penalty against the Soviets when Vagiz Khidiatulin had handled outside the area against Romania.

Italy's top referee Luigi Agnolin and the Soviet official Alexei Spirin were other Italia '90 officials to fall foul of FIFA general secretary Sepp Blatter and the tell-tale TV replay technology.

A few weeks earlier, another World Cup referee – Belgium's Marcel Van Langenhove, had been caught out.

Should TV technology continue to be the referee's enemy – or should it become his friend?

Van Langenhove's 'set piece' arrived with seven minutes left of the Champions' Cup semi-final between Benfica and Marseille when Valdo's corner was flicked on by Mats Magnusson for Vata to score.

Van Langenhove pointed to the centre circle as the French club's bemused players protested in vain. At first glance the goal had seemed legitimate, but television replays clearly showed that the Angolan, Vata had forced the ball home with his hand.

Surrounded by journalists in the home dressing room at the Stadium of Light, the Benfica substitute protested his innocence, claiming he had used his chest to divert the sphere into the Marseille net. Meanwhile an agitated Van Langenhove – persisted that his decision was correct.

"The decision I made was an honest one and my opinion has not changed after having seen the Portuguese television pictures," he said.

Marseille were furious. Manager Gerard Gili said: "We can accept that the referee did not see the handball at the time but when he continues to say that Vata scored with his chest after watching it on television, that is going too far."

The matter of 'the hand of the devil', as the goal was dubbed in France, took little time to develop into an affair of state. Prime Minister Michel Rocard wrote to Marseille president Bernard Tapie indicating that the manner of the Cote d'Azur club's elimination had 'perturbed' him.

"I ask myself why, for matches of such importance, one cannot use off-field referees, who follow events on a monitor and who have the power to immediately rectify a manifest error," Rocard wrote.

In similar vein, much of France's media also proposed that football authorities again consider a 'video eye' as a means to maintain sporting justice at a time when gamesmanship, if not downright cheating, is developing into an ever-refined art.

Thoughts that soccer should adopt the instant replay system of American football were rebuffed by Michel Zen Ruffinen, head of the referees section at FIFA.

"In the past we have looked at several propositions of this nature, but I do not think that any changes are envisageable in the near future," he said. "A game would be constantly interrupted for every questionable incident – it is impractical.

"Mr Van Langenhove was very well placed at the time of the Vata goal, but unfortunately his view obscured by a number of players, and even with television one needs many slow-motion replays to be certain that the player used his hand."

Continuing on the theme that the task of a referee is not an exact science and that human error on their part is an integral feature of the game, French World Cup official, Joel Quiniou went so far as to call for the abolition of television replays, which, he argued, undermined officials' authority.

Apart from believing that the introduction of electronic imagery would inevitably erode the power of a referee, FIFA's other argument resides in their fear that the expensive cost of installing such technology would create two tiers of football; that practised at the top-level with modern microchip equipment and the game played in the Third World or in the local park, where the finances would not be available.

The use of twentieth century science as soccer's ultimate arbiter, FIFA fear, would put at risk the laws of the game.

Despite football's powers-that-be adopting a somewhat Luddite stance towards the espousal of modern technology in order to eliminate gross refereeing mistakes, there can be no doubt that the computerized and visual know-how is not already available.

Every Sunday, for example, on Italian television, attractive and accurate computer-based graphics, are used to dissect each and every moment of conjecture in a game. Whether calculating if a ball had crossed the goal line, analysing an off-side decision or working out the distance of a defensive wall at a free-kick, computer graphics by the names of Telebeam, Oliside and Oliplay have entered the vocabulary of Italian football.

Yet although traditionalists might find such ideas abhorrent and the fact remains that film evidence has never been used to change a referee's decision, video has been utilised in recent times in disciplinary proceedings.

Last year Arsenal's Paul Davis was suspended after the television cameras caught him felling Glenn Cockerill of Southampton – a punch which the referee missed. A few months ago Pierre Dreossi of Cannes was banned for two months following his foul on Saint-Etienne's Guy Clavelloux, on the basis of television evidence.

More important, the French disciplinary committee strongly criticised referee Zwirog, who had not deemed the incident sufficiently serious to merit a yellow card.

How long can football remain one of the rare sports not to use an electronic adjutant to help ease the burden of the already hard-pressed refereeing corps, for whom split-second decision making is not always to be equated with justice?

The Swedish official came under fire for failing to spot Maradona's blatant handball in front of his own goal.

Al Talyani of the UAE one of a record number of bookings during Italia 90.

Vautrot shows the yellow card to Cameroon's Tataw after he had fouled Maradona during the opening match of Italia 90 in Milan.

Vautrot whistles up a place in history

Nick Bidwell on the career of a refereeing superstar ...

REFEREEING the Opening Match at the World Cup is perhaps the toughest task of all. The man chosen sets an example for his colleagues, for the teams, for the players.

No-one could accuse MICHEL VAUTROT of letting FIFA down – the big Frenchman made history by sending off two Cameroon defenders in their shock defeat of Argentina.

Vautrot, from Besanion, had also refereed the European championship final in 1988 gleaning the fruits of 15 years of experience as an international official.

One of his most arduous examinations came back in 1987 when he was awarded the onerous responsibility of Bayern Munich's Champions' Cup visit to Real Madrid. The seeds of a night of violence had been sown a fortnight earlier as Real had gone down 4-1 in Baveria and had two players dismissed by Scottish referee, Valentine. Now in the white-hot atmosphere of the Bernabeau, Real's notorious group of Ultra-Sur hooligans were hoping for revenge.

Vautrot remembers clearly inspecting the pitch prior to the game in the company of his linesmen. He said: "We were approaching the stand where the hard-core Real fans were gathered when suddenly we were met with a hail of firecrackers and rockets. On returning to the dressing room, I had to demand that the Real president put out a loudspeaker message, asking for calm."

By the time the two teams appeared an uneasy peace had been restored, but after just three minutes Jean-Marie Pfaff's goal was literally peppered with missiles of every description. Anxious Germans were ready to walk off, so Vautrot led the sides off the pitch, finally succeeding in persuading Augenthaler and company to return when a fragile order had returned to the terraces.

Maradona in trouble again.

Vautrot said: "I might have abandoned the game, but I was fearful that if I did so, a riot would ensue. For a moment I thought of Heysel so, like there, we played the match."

Vautro had emerged from test of his powers of authority and diplomacy with distinction.

A year earlier, he had experienced the bitter-sweet taste of taking charge of the Barcelona-Steaua Bucharest Champions' Cup Final in the knowledge that he had not been designated to make the trip to officiate at the Mexico World Cup. Yet whatever his disappointment, that final in Seville served as further testimony to Vautrot's competence. The game was, of course, by no means a classic, but after a period of incessant fouling, five cautions within ten minutes and a warning to the captains allowed him to establish principles of fair-play, if not sporting excitement.

Even in defeat, Barcelona's keeper, Urruti paid the Frenchman's integrity the ultimate compliment, saying: "Vautrot was excellent. Many people thought that, as the match was in Seville, he would tend to favour us. No, in spite of our 60,000 supporters, he did not sanction the Romanians any more than us."

Vautrot admits that his lowest ebb as a referee was when he was implicated in Roma president Dino Viola's crass attempts to fix his club's qualification against Dundee United in the 1984 Champions' Cup semi-final. Roma had lost the first-leg 2-0 and, so the story goes, Viola gave two shady characters £50,000 to bribe Vautrot and ensure Roma's passage. However, the money was never offered to the French referee and although he was cleared by FIFA, the whisperings affected him.

Vautrot was born in the village of Antorpe in the Jura region of eastern France on October 23, 1945. He recalls how, at 17, he discovered his vocation for the whistle and notebook. He said: "I was an official of the Besancon supporters club and one evening following a defeat I criticised the match referee. A club director demanded what I knew about refereeing."

Stung into action, Vautrot passed his theoretical refereeing examination in 1963 and progressively scaling the hierarchy as he became a regional referee in 1969 and a French national official in 1972. Three years later he was admitted to the FIFA list and his international baptism came in March 1976 in Alicante for Spain v Hungary.

Vautrot attributes his success to his belief in information communication with the players. He said "To be respected by the players, one must first respect them. I consider a player as a friend."

Argentina's stars may not agree after Vautrot's one major error in Italy – allowing an extra eight minutes play at the end of the first half of extra time in the Argentines' semi-final against hosts Italy!

SUPERSTARS?

Not where the World Cup is concerned

IN 1988, Marco van Basten, Ruud Gullit, Frank Rijkaard and Ronald Koeman finished first, second, third and fourth in World Soccer's elections for World Footballer of the Year. In Italy all four failed abjectly, and Holland left Italy early. Why?

Marco van Basten almost expected to be the man of the tournament. Before this World Cup he was working hard at training sessions, helping his teammates, and taking responsibility for strategy.

He was determined to stamp his name on Italia '90. He knew that at 25 he was at his peak as a striker, and with Gullit, Rijkaard and Ronald Koeman all at the ideal age of 27, the Dutch stood their best chance ever of winning a World Cup. A small footballing nation, Holland may probably never again produce such a gifted group.

Van Basten, it seems in retrospect, was too arrogant. When the Dutch failed to overpower Egypt as he had expected, he lacked the desire to break his pain barrier, to give his team that extra touch of genius. He expected everything to be easy, and when the going got touch he appeared to give up.

"He's been on holiday for months," said Arrigo Sacchi, his manager at Milan. After January Van Basten scored just three goals in the Italian league. Subconsciously he was probably saving himself for the World Cup, but in the process he seems to have lost his sharpness.

In December, when Holland were due to play Brazil in a friendly, Van Basten flew home to Amsterdam from the World Club Final in Tokyo. The Dutch FA picked him for the match, but he failed to appear, claiming tiredness.

Van Basten's opposition to Leo Beenhakker, Holland's manager in Italy, has been well publicised. Van Basten worships Johan Cruyff, manager of Barcelona, and felt that he should have led Holland in the World Cup. When the Dutch started the tournament badly, Van Basten sulked. He seems to have thought that if the Dutch FA rejected his man, they were to blame for Holland's failure.

Teammate Ruud Gullit had very different problems. Gullit also believed Cruyff should have been manager, but is not the type to sulk. He was too concerned with his form to worry about the manager.

"I'm six months away from peak fitness", he admitted.

Since the European Championships he had played just a handful of matches. He improved in every match in Italy, and against West Germany he was something like the Gullit of old. But even against Egypt, when balls kept jumping off his feet, his acceleration let him down, and he failed to find space, refused to hide. He asked for the ball, made runs and encouraged others. Despite his pitiable form he played like a captain. In six months time he should be at his best again.

Rijkaard claims he was provoked against the Germans.

Many Dutch experts feel Beenhakker should have moved Gullit back to his old position of libero (where he would have had more time and space) and dropped Ronald Koeman. Three months ago the idea of Holland without Koeman was unimaginable. But he came to Italy with no confidence at all. Gone were his passes over sixty yards. He took no part in Holland's build-up, which meant that he played strictly as a defender. Andy Koeman is a poor defender.

Beenhakker and Holland's medical staff diagnosed that Koeman lacked dynamism, and suggested that Barcelona's training sessions were to blame. This scarcely veiled attack on Beenhakker's rival Cruyff is easily rebutted.

For one thing, Koeman's teammates in Spain's World Cup team Roberto and Salinas, seemed dynamic enough. Secondly, Koeman has always been extremely short on dynamism. The attack on Cruyff appeared an act of desperation.

Frank Rijkaard was the one Dutch star who played well, though he never approached his form of the European Championships, where he showed the world how to defend on technique alone. Rijkaard wanted to play in midfield in Italy, but except for the Egyptian match Beenhakker played him at the back.

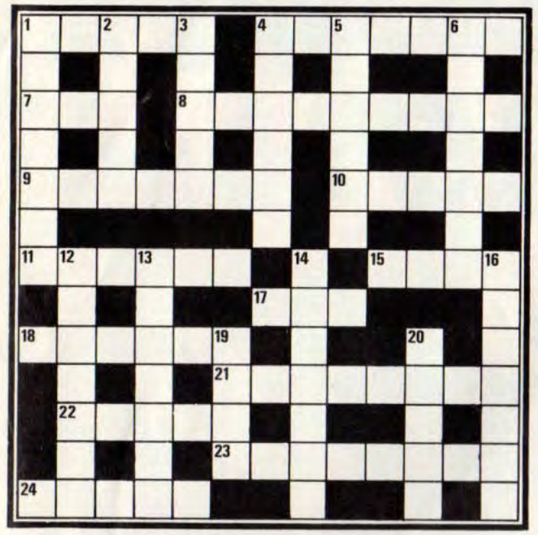
For all Rijkaard's objections, the manager's decision seems justified. Holland needed a man in midfield who would carry the team on his back. Rijkaard has the ability but not the dominating personality that this role demands. As long as he remains a modest player, he will always play supporting parts.

His dismissal against Germany, for spitting at Voller, was utterly out of character. Rijkaard is possibly the most placid and relaxed man in football. He claims that Voller made racist comments. But when Holland's last star left the field he took with him Dutch hopes of winning the World Cup.

BY SIMON KUPER

WORLD SOCCER CROSSWORD

Compiled by Barry Talbot



ACROSS

1. ----- Park, home of Sunderland.
4. 1970 winners of the UEFA Cup.
7. Ian, former Man. United and Scotland centre-half.
8. Scorer in the 1977 FA Cup Final.
9. Top side from Eastern Europe.
10. First Division striker.
11. Peter, ex-Everton and QPR forward.
15. See 19 Down.
17. Peter, long-serving Football League goalkeeper.
18. Brazilian star of the 1982 World Cup.
21. Beenhakker's short-lived predecessor.
22. Club side from Luxembourg.
23. Famous team from South America.
24. Yugoslav who played for Luton.

DOWN

1. Former Aberdeen and Chelsea full-back.
2. Dutch striker.
3. Coventry City forward.
4. Napoli midfield player.
5. QPR striker.
6. Forename of a Real Madrid legend.
12. Former Burnley and Sunderland goalkeeper.
13. Juventus and Italy goalkeeper.
14. Middlesbrough defender.
16. Foreign international in the Football League.
19 + 15 Across. Member of West Germany's World Cup squad.
20. Tony, one half of a famous strike partnership.

JULY ANSWERS

Across: 1. Campos. 4. Shengelia. 10. Rasic. 11. Astle. 12. Lima. 13. Casarin. 15. Kiss. 17. Bene. 18. Olguin. 21. Netto. 24. Ayala. 26. Olle. 29. Rosato. 31. Cesar. 33. Nilts. 34. Leandro. 36. Moore. 37. Hartford. 38. Rossi. Down: 1. Careca. 2. Mas. 3. Oscar. 5. Hitchens. 6. Neeskens. 7. Ellis. 8. Amaral. 9. Haan. 14. Silva. 16. Sotil. 19. Ufarte. 20. Novo. 22. Garrincha. 23. Metreveli. 25. Maradona. 28. Bilardo. 30. Solari. 32. Simoes. 34. Leon. 35. Omar.

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TOO MUCH TALK, NOT ENOUGH GOALS

BRIAN HOMEWOOD ON BRAZIL'S ITALIAN UPSET

BRAZIL'S footballers seemed more interested in filling their pockets and promoting their own images than in winning the World Cup.

Hardly a day passed during Brazil's brief participation in the competition without a Brazilian player appearing in a television interview and saying that he should be in the team or, if he was in the team already, that he was playing too well to be dropped.

The first and most publicised outburst came, surprise, surprise, from Renato Portaluppi, who threatened that he would "pack his bags and leave" if manager Sebastiao Lazaroni did not give him a chance in the team. "I did not come here as a tourist" he fumed, forgetting that many people felt he was lucky to be in the squad at all.

Renato re-appeared on television the next day to say that he didn't say what millions of people had witnessed him say the day before, but it was all immaterial as Lazaroni chose to forget the whole episode in any case.

This may well have been a mistake because from then until Brazil's elimination, there were a host of similar threats from other players.

Aldair said he was thinking of walking out after Lazaroni named Ricardo Rocha as the replacement for the suspended Mozer in the Scotland game, while Rocha himself, nicked Dick Dastardly (after the cartoon character) back home, had been continually plugging himself in interviews.

Howls

Lazaroni's decision to test Romario in the Scotland game brought howls of protest from Muller, the player who made way and another who was lucky to even be in Italy, having walked out on the Brazil squad last year during the Copa America.

The manager's plans to make other changes in the Scotland game, in particular to give Mazinho a more than deserved chance at right back, had to be shelved thanks to a near rebellion from Careca, Alemao and Dunga, who newspapers claimed were virtually running the show in Italy. It was also claimed that Careca, who made more impact for his lambada than his football, had been another to make a Renato-style threat to return home if he was left out of the team.

In addition to trying to loudmouth their way into team, the players wasted a good deal of time arguing about money. CBF president Ricardo Teixeira had declared back in April that the question of bonuses and prize money would be settled before the squad left for Italy, but this turned out to be another of his many unfulfilled promises.

The problem first reared its ugly head back in Brazil during the squad's pre-Cup preparations when the players staged a protect in which.they demanded a bigger share of the money the CBF was receiving from its sponsorship deal with Pepsi. (The one million dollar deal with the CBF expires at the end of this year).

The players showed their disapproval by appearing in a team photograph with their hands covering the Pepsi logo on their training kits. After this the players tried to pass the gesture off as a joke, but the beans were spilled a month later, in Italy, by Taffarel's girlfriend, who said in an interview that some players were still unhappy and that some were receiving a bigger bonus than others.

It was not just with the bonus that the players were worried. Many members of the squad spent time renegotiating their contracts with European clubs – either by telephone or personally with their agents – while some were even trying to work out transfers. Rocha was involved in conversations with representatives of Fiorentina (the deal fell through), while Aldair had his attention diverted by questions referring to his contract with Roma, the club that bought him from Benfica.

You may have deduced from all this that team spirit was not exactly in abundance in the Brazil camp. There were some notable exceptions, namely Ze Carlos, Acacio, Taffarel, Mauro Galvao, Ricardo Gomes, Mazinho, Branco, Bismarck, Valdo and Tita. But overall, it was a climate of "salvar-se quen puder" (the Brazilian way of saying "Everyone for himself"). With the players they had, Brazil did not need opponents.

Lazaroni himself criticised the attitude of some players, though he would not name names. At his first press conference following his return to Brazil (Lazaroni slipped out of Rio airport through a side door and then locked himself in his flat for six days before making any declarations), he said there was a "disturbed atmosphere" amongst the players on the eve of the matches, because some players put themselves "above the interests of the team and did not behave decently."

Ironically, Lazaroni had said back in April that one of the most important aspects of his job was to create a good atmosphere in the national team. "It's possibly more important than getting the tactical scheme right," he said. On his return to Brazil, he recognised that he had failed.

Unfortunately, Lazaroni's behaviour itself was not exemplary. The week after naming the Brazil squad, he travelled to Italy especially to record a television commercial, while the question of his move to Fiorentina continually kept cropping up during Brazil's training period. Lazaroni never made any attempt to keep either matter secret, but it was hardly a good example to set.

Accusations

He also caused problems by giving exclusive interviews to TV Globo for a 70,000 dollar fee. Again there was no secrecy involved but it led to the inevitable accusations by the other three Brazilian networks – Bandeirantes, SBT and Manchete – that he was withholding information from them during press conferences to give to Globo afterwards, which in turn led to a general deterioration in the relationship between Lazaroni and the press.

In the light of all this, the discussions about Lazaroni's 3-5-2 libero system and his team selections seem fairly irrelevant. Lazaroni insisted that he was not abandoning the Brazilian way of playing, but that he was just trying to make it more competitive. He also pointed it out that it was the same scheme with which Brazil won the Copa America last year and with which they beat Italy and Holland in subsequent friendlies.

On the team selection side, Lazaroni's biggest mistake was to leave out Mazinho, who was an integral part of the team that won the Copa America and earned Brazil's qualification.

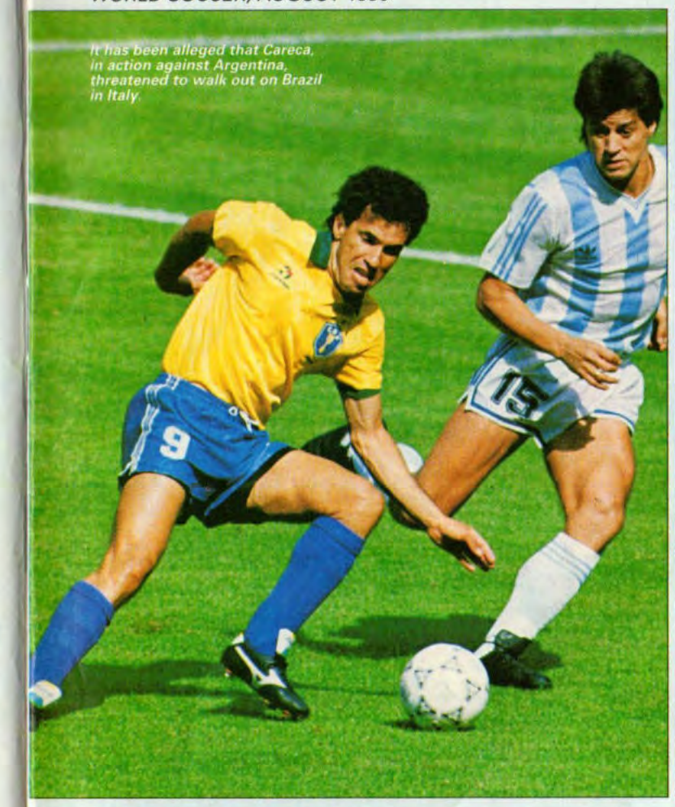
Along with goalkeeper Taffarel, Mazinho was just about the only player to be cheered by the supporters who gathered at Rio de Janeiro airport to see the team return home and to protest against the CBF.

Lazaroni has now gone to coach Fiorentina for two years with a contract worth 300,000 dollars a year. His replacement is Paulo Roberto Falcao, the star of Brazil's 1982 World Cup team and Roma, but who as yet has no experience as a manager.

Many people feel that there were positive aspects to Brazil's early elimination. A long run in the Cup, and especially victory, would almost certainly have been exploited by Brazil's president Fernando "Indiana Jones" Collor to cover up the fact that his policies are making peoples' lives a misery.

Similarly, Ricardo Teixeira may well have used a World Cup victory to tell everyone what a good job he is doing as CBF president. In fact, Teixeira's presidency has so far been no better than that of his predecessor, the late Otavio Guimaraes (Guimaraes died of cancer at the end of June).

The critical state of the country's domestic game (empty stadiums, pathetic referees, corrupt and incompetent directors, ridiculous championships, top players going abroad etc, etc) will now be fully exposed and, hopefully, Teixeira will be forced to take action rather than gallivanting around Europe.



It has been alleged that Careca, in action against Argentina, threatened to walk out on Brazil in Italy.

Jose Mozer was suspended for the game against Scotland.

Dunga (left) and Renata were also critical of their World Cup manager Lazaroni (centre).

VICINI LET OFF THE HOOK

But Italy can't believe how the cup slipped from their grasp

ITALY'S hunt for scapegoats began the moment Argentine goalkeeper Sergio Goycochea cut off their World Cup dreams.

Up until those crucial moments no Italian had even dreamed that the nation would not be celebrating a record fourth Cup triumph on Sunday, July 8. The following day Italy, which had exulted every waking moment of the finals, was suddenly quiet. The buzz appeared to have gone out of even the traffic.

The dilemma for press and fans was that almost too many scapegoats showed their heads above the parapet on that disastrous night in Naples.

Manager Azeglio Vicini was one, for continuing to omit Carlo Ancelotti, for recalling off-form, out of practice Gianluca Vialli then for substituting midfield general Giuseppe Giannini – who also happened to be a proven penalty expert; goalkeeper Walter Zenga was another, for flapping weakly at the flick-header from Claudio Caniggia which provided Argentina's equaliser; Vialli himself was yet another, for performing so dismally on his recall – then bleating that Vicini was to blame for using him too deep.

Vicini, whose popularity rating had at one stage risen beyond that of Enzo Bearzot – Cup-winning boss in 1982 – remains one of the most sympathetic of Italian national managers. He came across as a serious, honest man who had worked hard at his job and who deserved the benefit of the doubt when controversy did arise. This image-building exercise was the key factor which saved not only Vicini but Italy.

Easy target

The anger and disappointment at semi-final failure found the manager no easy target for once. Federation president Antonio Matarrese quickly confirmed that Vicini was the man to guide Italy through the forthcoming European championship and his refusal to be provoked by some of his players' more critical comments restored morale together in time for the Third Place Match against England.

Asked how he reacted to Vialli's criticism, Vicini merely said: "I don't give Vialli's words too much importance. He is a young man and a very, very disappointed one. When we are young we all say things we may regret."

Vicini picked a team specifically to beat England and was duly rewarded with a match whose life and spirit went a long way towards reassuring their public – particularly after the awful Final – that Italy deserved much better than third place.

Juventus owner Gianni Agnelli expressed the sentiments of the nation when he said: "Never mind contrived situations such as penalty shoot-outs; Vicini can be satisfied that Italy are moral winners of the 1990 World Cup."

Yet Italy, with time and perspective, may bitterly regret missing their best-ever chance of winning a World Cup when they enjoyed hosts' advantage and when much of the rest of the field was so mediocre.

They kicked-off against Austria with virtually the same side that got their 1988 European championship campaign underway – Andrea Carnevale for Roberto Mancini being the only change. But yet again the tried and tested front two of Vialli and Carnevale could not find the scoring touch.

So Vicini sent on Salvatore Schillaci and Carnevale's replacement struck – almost immediately – for the game's only goal.

Against the US Vicini gave the 'old guard' another chance. The only absentee from the first game was Ancelotti, who had gone off at half-time against Austria with a muscle strain. And with Vicini hoping for a goal-rush, especially after the American's 5-1 crash against Czechoslovakia, the more attack-minded Nicola Berti stepped in.

For Carnevale this was the scoring chance he had been waiting for. Yet the shadow of Schillaci and Vicini's words that "Andrea must stay calm tonight and forget any thoughts of substitutions," cannot have helped.

After Giannini gave Italy an 11-minute lead, everything looked set for a goal-feast – especially as 15 minutes later Italy were awarded a penalty.

However, after Vialli's spot-kick hit the post, both he and Carnevale drifted out of the game. Then when the touch-line announced that number 16's time was up, early in the second half, Carnevale glanced skywards before mouthing some obsceneties and quitting the World Cup.

After reviewing the Roma forward's exit on television, along with 26 million other Italians, Vicini warned the player to behave himself. Carnevale apologised and said it would not happen again. He was right. He'd just played his last part in Italia '90.

Vialli too was in trouble. His penalty-miss had put the 'untouchable' Gianluca under extra psychological pressure. "Penalty takers have to be calm," he said, "and I'm not sure I can guarantee that any more." When the self-doubt turned into a mysterious muscular pain, Vicini left him out of the next game.

Italy thus sent the untested partnership of £8 million Roberto Baggio and Schillaci into the front line against Czechoslovakia. It was time to see if the two top Italian goalscorers from last season's championship (with a total of 32, compared with 18 from Vialli and Carnevale) could fare any better.

Pressure

Qualification had not lifted the pressure to win. Apart from not having beaten Czechoslovakia for 37 years, Italy needed to win their group to keep Rome advantage and avoid the possibility of a West German quarter-final encounter.

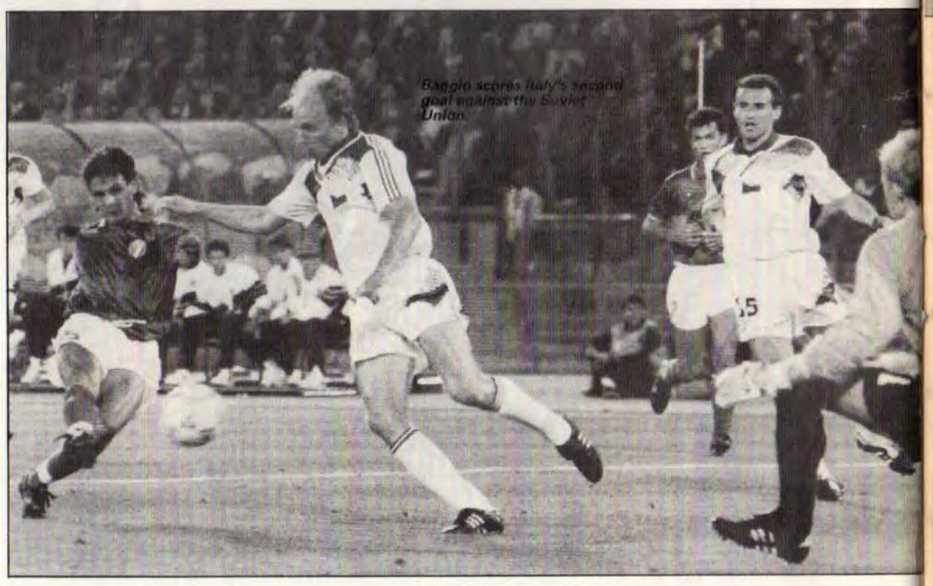
Schillaci took just nine minutes to prove he was no one-goal-wonder. And after a lucky break, which saw a perfectly good Stanislav Griga equaliser wrongly ruled out for off-side, the other half of the new Juventus double-act struck. Baggio's goal after a mazy run through the Czech defence, marked the end of Vicini's search for a winning partnership.

Roberto Donadoni, who had twisted a knee early in the second half, and Ancelotti were the only two fitness doubts for the second round clash with Uruguay.

Vialli too was on the sick list through Italy's medical team could find little wrong with the thigh muscle, which he said was giving him pain, and could only assume it was fatigue.

Vialli insisted: "I don't need a psychologist. I'm not a broken man and my injury is not diplomatic. It's real, but nobody seems to believe me." The reality, though, was that with Schillaci and Baggio on song, he was not needed.

Vialli was critical of his manager.



Baggio scores Italy's second goal against the Soviet Union.

Against the less-than-impressive Uruguayans it took a 52-minute substitution to awaken the Azzurri, with Aldo Serena replacing Inter teammate Berti. Soon afterwards he sent Schillaci on his way to a beautifully timed left-foot strike, and a third World Cup goal. The Toto show was back on course. And when Serena himself sealed victory with a header minutes from time, Italy were in the quarter-finals.

Wise head

Many thought they were already in the final. Schillaci started to talk of a July 8 rendez-vous with the Germans, and Serena declared that Beckenbauer's men were the only team good enough to block their path to glory. Even the wise head of Ancelotti was tipping an Italy-West Germany final.

Ireland gave Italy a quarter-final chasing but no more. Italy won 1-0 and that was the cue for more celebrating, more Toto euphoria. However, the knowledge that their semi-final opponents would be Diego Maradona's Argentina, in a game played in front of his Naples home crowd, seemed to subdue any further talk of the final.

Italy were also complaining of fatigue – with one exception, Vialli. "The pain has gone," he said, "and I'm ready to face Argentina." That seemed to be good enough for Vicini. Baggio went back on the bench.

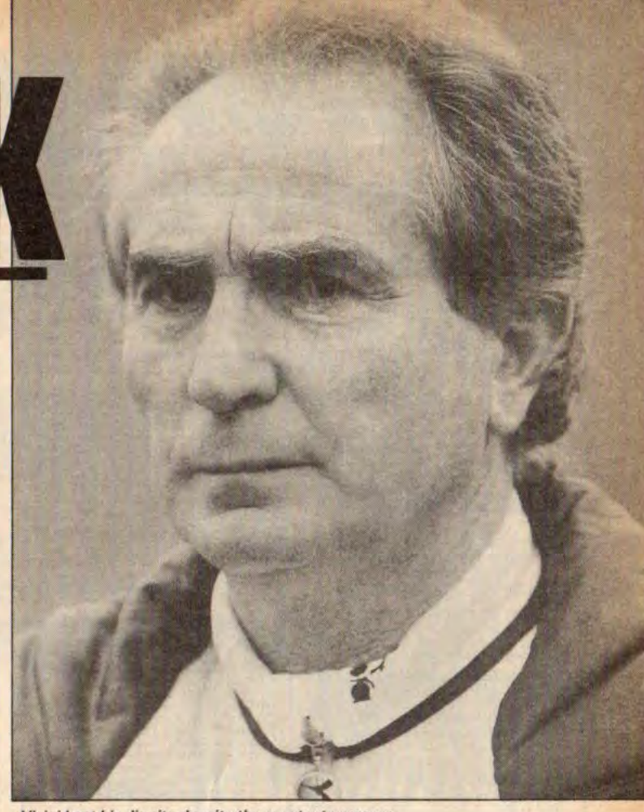
As the teams lined up in San Paolo, any fears of Maradona's plea to 'his' Napoli supporters to cheer Argentina were forgotten. Whistles and jeers during his country's national anthem visibly angered him, and Argentina fell behind to yet another piece of Schillaci opportunism after 18 minutes.

Whether he was standing off-side or not as Sergio Goycoechea parried Vialli's shot, did not seem to matter, with few protests from the Argentines and next to no television analysis of the goal.

The second half though turned out to be another act entirely. Maradona came back into the game as Italy fell back giving Argentina more space in midfield. And just 22 minutes from the final whistle Caniggia backheaded the ball past a floundering Zenga, the first goal Italy had conceded.

After that the game petered out, despite Baggio and Serena taking over from the tired Giannini and Vialli. Even the extra-time sending off of Argentina's Ricardo Guisti could not break the stalemate, though French referee Vautrot allowed the first half of extra time to run on by eight minutes.

Dejected Donadoni after missing his spot-kick to end Italy's dreams of a place in the World Cup Final.



Vicini kept his dignity despite the constant pressure.

Penalties were always going to favour Argentina after their spot-kick showdown with Yugoslavia in the previous round. Baresi, Baggio and De Agostini all converted and Argentina made no mistake with their first three. But then when Donadoni's shot was saved and Maradona converted, Serena completed the ignominy by firing straight at Goycochea. The dream was over.

Ironically Donadoni had been asked by Vicini to be the official penalty taker, after Vialli's miss against the US. He said afterwards: "I don't usually take the penalties for Milan, but Vicini always makes me a candidate for the shoot-outs because he trusts me to score."

Courtesy

Nobody though blamed the unlucky number 17 (Italy's equivalent of 13). But Vicini was hardly afforded the same courtesy.

The main protests included the re-call of Vialli – especially after his two earlier lack-lustre performances – and the break up of the dream-team of Sohillaci and Baggio. And for his strange and late substitutions – Serena for Vialli and Baggio for Giannini.

Vicini said: "Vialli probably would not have played had Baggio been allowed more time to rest after the Ireland game. And on the substitutions, I was about to send on Ancelotti to tighten the midfield when Argentina scored. Then I started to think of penalties."

Zenga was also rapped for Caniggia's goal and for being sent the wrong way on all the penalties. He pleaded his innocence, but to no avail. Even his breaking of Peter Shilton's 500-minute World Cup shut-out record – by 18 minutes – was forgotten.

Vialli hit back by blaming others, saying: "I was asked to do a lot of defending against Argentina. It upsets me that some players can play where they want to. I'm just the mule when they need someone to kick."

That outburst cost Vialli any chance of facing England in the third place play-off at Bari. But two other absentees were more innocent, Marocchi and Mancini. Along with substitute goalkeepers Stefano Tacconi and Gianluca Pagliuca, their World Cup never started.

Especially disappointed was Mancini, who had played in all of Italy's 1988 European Championship games. "Why should I be angry?" he said. "I'm just a bit embittered because I haven't played for a minute!"

Stop Lineker

Ciro Ferrara however was plucked from a similar fate and was given the job of making Peter Beardsley. Pietro Vierchowod too was in the starting line-up for the first time. His task was to stop Gary Lineker.

For Italy the game was vital, to win back some pride after the shame of Naples, and to patch up the now visible cracks within the "happy family". It also gave Schillaci and Baggio another opportunity to re-establish their striking partnership. And a goal apiece on Italy's way to a 2-1 victory did just that, as well as giving Schillaci his dream of reaching Paolo Rossi's six- goal target from 1982.

The win also put a smile back on Vialli's face, who promptly asked to be forgiven. Vicini replied: "I forgive everyone!"

Despite the earlier traumas and the semi-final disappointments Italy had started the World Cup with a poor scoring record and a shaky front pair, and left it with a healthy ten goals and the scoring revelation of the competition, Salvatore Schillaci, its top marksman.

As he is joined by Baggio at Juventus this season, these two will surely be Italy's finest hope of European Championship glory in Sweden in 1992.

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Czechoslovakia's Tomas Skuhravy scores against the United States in their opening match of Italia 90.

Americans wave goodbye to reality

BY PAUL GARDNER

THE leaders of the United States Soccer Federation, who have been parting company with reality for quite a while, have now made the final break.

Up in the never-never land of their headquarters in Colorado Springs, the USSF goes about its business as though nothing has happened, almost as though the US national team has actually won something, rather than putting on a disastrous performance at the 1990 World Cup.

Consider: three games played, three games lost. Eight goals against, two for. Three penalty kicks and one red card against. And a loss in the last game against a team playing with only ten men.

Somehow or other, president Werner Fricker and his minions have managed to insulate themselves completely from this ugly reality, and are now making out that things went pretty well. It is not an unexpected reaction – after all, it is Fricker who is responsible for the mess, with his inept choices for the team's coaching staff.

Fricker, whose view of the game seems to have been immutably conditioned by his long-gone playing days with the Philadelphia German-Hungarians, decided that the World Cup did not warrant the appointment of an experienced coaching staff.

First he chose as the Federation's director of coaching, one Walter Chyzowych – a former national team coach with an abysmal record of never having won anything, and of producing teams that collected more yellow and red cards than they ever scored goals. During Chyzowych's term as national team coach, the New York Cosmos set up a meeting between him with Hennes Weisweiler (then coach of the Cosmos), thinking, naively, that Chyzowych might find it useful. Weisweiler came out of the meeting shaking his head, saying "This guy doesn't want to know anything," and Chyzowych went blithely on to lead to USA to yet another inglorious failure in the World Cup qualifying round.

In short, Chyzowych's qualifications for the director of coaching job were not exactly obvious. But it probably needs mentioning that he is a close buddy of Fricker's. At some time within the past year, Chyzowych has been promoted by Fricker, and is now the USSF's technical director. Nobody knows quite what this means (though Chyzowych has been heard to publicly proclaim "I own soccer in the States!"), as the appointment was never offically announced.

Buddies

With Chyzowych in place, it was logical that Bob Gansler would become the national coach. His qualifications for the job were on the same level as Chyzowych's – negligible. The man who would lead the US to World Cup glory had never even been to a World Cup, and had never won anything as a coach. But he is a close buddy of Walt Chyzowych.

The results of this utterly mismanaged affair were there for all to see in Italy. A dreadful 5-1 clobbering by Czechoslovakia in the first game. A game for which the US players were clearly unprepared. Unprepared after over a year of playing together under Gansler. That humiliation conditioned the second game. The US took the field against Italy with only one thing in mind – to save face. This they did by playing totally negative soccer, limiting their attacks to long whacks downfield by goalkeeper Tony Meola.

Italy did not handle the tactics well, and Vialli's penalty miss saved matters for the USA. In the final moments, the USA could even have tied the game – a scoreline which would have been totally absurd in terms of which team was trying to play soccer.

Remarks

No matter. Gansler's remarks at the post-game press conference took on their usual surreal tone. It was almost as though he was celebrating a great triumph. One had to keep reminding oneself that the US had just lost another game, and was almost certainly out of the World Cup.

It seemed almost indecent to bring the matter up – Gansler was up there in the clouds, curtly avoiding questions about his bungled choice of players, quoting Thomas Mann, and saying "This was the real US." An interesting observation – for this was a totally defensive US, and Gansler had been denying for a year that his coaching was defensively-orientated.

The final game against Austria showed yet another face of the US team. Out of the naivete of the first game and the negativity of the second was born the macho "they're not going to push us around any more" attitude of the game against Austria. An ugly, foul-littered affair – with Austria every bit as guilty as the US. A game to forget.

But a significant game, nonetheless – because this rough-house style was not in any way typical of Gansler's teams. This was a throwback to the darkest days of the primitive Chyzowych era. Unquestionably, the technical director had a hand in this one – the Hand of the USA Soccer God at work.

The performance hardly measured up to Fricker's pre-tournament predictions – that the US would qualify for the second round. When this was pointed out to Fricker, he dribbled around the point, saying, "Well, that's what I wanted to happen, I didn't say it would happen."

In any country that takes its soccer seriously, Chyzowych and Gansler would have been promptly dispatched to some sort of coaches' retirement home. More to the point, they would never have been appointed in the first place – "Yes", said a top, and understatement-prone, FIFA official, "We were a little surprised when the USA appointed Gansler."

But Fricker, an almost comically stubborn man who has never been known to admit a mistake, insists that everything is going along fine, and that Gansler will stay as the coach for the next four years.

A silly statement, of course, and one that has further damaged Fricker's already crumbling credibility. The rumours during the World Cup were loud and clear: Franz Beckenbauer will go to the States. That, surely, must be the reality, a reality that will extinguish another of Fricker's choice remarks, that "We can't afford Beckenbauer." What the USA cannot afford is four more years, or

Gansler must go!

even four more months, of Chyzowych and Gansler.

Whether Beckenbauer comes as coach, or as an adviser or even as a Technical Director is unimportant at this moment. What is important is that when he does come he is not saddled with an incompetent supporting staff. One can sleep comfortably on this one, certain that Beckenbauer would never accept such an arrangement.

Fricker's stubborn refusal to get rid of Gansler has held back the development of a truly representative and viable US national team for over a year.

That same stubborness has also led to an alarming delay in the setting up of marketing and television arrangements for the 1994 World Cup.

Down and out . . . the Soviet Union were the first nation eliminated from Italia 90.

Soviets have only themselves to blame

BY KEIR RADNEDGE

SOVIET manager Valeri Lobanovsky went home a very bitter and disappointed man. You did not have to be a mind-reader to see that.

The usually formal mask which Lobanovsky presents to press conferences of foreign journalists had dropped. Here was an angry man, who felt all his years of work had been betrayed by refereeing incompetence.

Lobanovsky blamed the Uruguayan referee, Juan Daniel Cardellino, for awarding Romania a decisive penalty when Vagiz Khidiatulin had committed a handball offence outside the penalty area, not inside; Lobanovsky blamed the Swedish referee, Erik Fredriksson, for ignoring Diego Maradona's handling of a goal-bound effort from Oleg Kuznetsov in the match against Argentina.

Unforgivable

Two factors made Fredriksson's 'blindness' all the more unforgivable. For one thing, he was standing only a matter of yards from Maradona with no-one between them; there was no way he could NOT have seen what happened. Secondly, Fredriksson was the man whose decisions (in collusion with his linesmen) had seen Belgium beat the Soviet Union 4-3 in an extra-time thriller of a match in the second round in the Mexico World Cup, four years ago.

No wonder Lobanovsky felt betrayed, disappointed, let down.

Yet was he right to lay so much emphasis on refereeing decisions? As time passes, may he not think more deeply about the real causes of one of the most public setbacks for Soviet soccer at international level for a very long time?

For 15 years now, Lobanovsky's Kiev-based football philosophy has represented the international face of the Soviet game. Whatever the competing successes of Moscow Spartak or Dnepr at domestic level, Kiev have been synoymous with Soviet soccer for foreigners.

That is hardly surprising, given that Kiev players have comprised a majority of the national team and the national squad.

It is not necessary to discuss any further here the particular scientific and analytical approach which Lobanovsky brought to coaching. But, whatever the immediate impressions left by the Soviet team at this World Cup, Lobanovsky has been a highly-successful and respected figure in the international game. That remains unaltered and Soviet soccer should appreciate the fact.

In theory, the Soviet Union – in my opinion – had probably its finest squad of players in modern times in the latter years of the 1980s. The 1986 World Cup, the 1988 European championship and the 1990 World Cup, were the ideal stages on which this team should have produced its very best form.

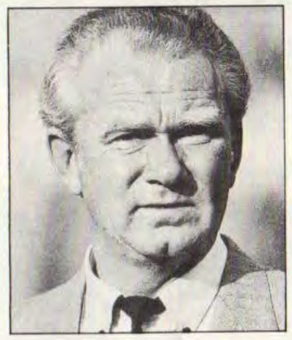
So what went wrong?

In 1986, in the World Cup finals, the Soviet side began with six goals against Hungary; a wonderful display. Except that, in World Cups, national teams should not start at their best; they should build up to their best, over four or five games. By the time the Soviet side met a strong, powerful Belgian side in the second round, they were running out of steam. Belgium beat them, not so much because of the referee, but because of stamina and their greater good sense in pacing their progress through the tournament.

So, to 1988 and the European finals in West Germany. The Soviet side played some superb soccer. Men such as Litovchenko, Zavarov and Aleinikov were admirable in midfield; Protasov a constant danger in attack; Rats and Mikhailichenko ideal pillars of support.

But a definitive pattern of play was emerging. This Soviet side preferred to sit back and wait for the opposition to attack. Given space on the break, on the counter-attack, Zavarov and Co were quick and dangerous. But, when it came to the Final against Holland, the demands of competition had changed.

Now the Soviet side could not sit happily back, as they had in their opening group victory over Holland. Now they needed to come forward, to



Lobanovsky blamed referees for the failures of his team.

'make the play,' to dominate the Dutch midfield.

And that was where they failed. This Soviet side, so impressive on the break, appeared to lack knowledge of how to play a positive, creative game of their own.

Lobanovsky, even then, hinted at a criticism of the refereeing system which sent his team into the Final without the superb Kuznetsov in the centre of defence. But it was not in defence that the Soviets fell down, it was in attack.

Dominate

And so to Italia '90.

Again the same failing, this time revealed right from the start. When the Soviet Union had to come out of their defence– orientated shell and dominate Romania with their own creative football, they could not do so.

That Romania led 1-0 and later 2-0 should not have been a disaster. Teams often come back from such deficits to win their matches. But this Soviet team lacked creative confidence.

More, it lacked individual confidence, too. Protasov and Zavarov should have scored long before Lacatus scored Romania's first goal. And, at World Cup level, any team MUST take its goal chances. The alternative is a plane ride home. Even Brazil found that out, against Argentina in Turin, to their cost.

The Soviets' match against Argentina had suddenly become a matter of life-or-death. Now Lobanovsky, like so many of his managerial colleagues in Italy, threw everything up in the air. After 10 successful years he suddenly dropped goalkeeper Dasayev and midfielder Litovchenko – men whose vast experience was surely important in a crisis.

Like other managers, Lobanovsky appeared to allow himself to be panicked into change because of one defeat.

But, by ringing such changes, the manager increased the pressure on his players rather than reduced it. In the circumstances, defeat by Argentina was not such a surprise.

Yet, even here, the Soviets allowed chances to escape. After only eight minutes – before the Maradona incident, before Argentina opened the scoring – Dobrovolski opened up the South American defence only for Shalimov's shot to be scrambled out.

Victory over Cameroon came too late to save the Soviet team. They were the first nation to be eliminated from Italia '90.

Whose fault? Referees? No team can correct a referee. The alternative is to make sure that whether referees have good days or bad days, that your tactics and performance do not leave any room for doubt.

The Soviet team did not take their goal chances when they should have done. They lacked the know-all (or even talent, perhaps?) to control their matches. At any other level such errors might not be punished so severely.

But the World Cup is the pinnacle of the game. You have to treat it with the utmost respect. The penalty is failure.

At least, from that standpoint, Lobanovsky may one day find consolation. He was in good company: 22 other nations flew home from Italy as 'failures' as well.

* ANATOLY BISHOVETS is the new Soviet national coach and has resigned as boss of Moscow Dynamo so as to concentrate – unlike Lobanovsky – on the one job.

Nick Bidwell on the contrasting World Cup fortunes of two South American heroes

VALDERRAMA: Back in the groove

A FRENCH television soccer programme earlier this year chilled the hearts of Colombian fans.

On screen, national team star, Carlos Valderrama, solemnly declared that the side was to withdraw from the World Cup. He blamed preparations disrupted irreparably by the suspension of the league championship, a tragic sequel to the assassination of a referee, death threats to internationals and allegations of links between clubs and drug cartels.

Yet before Colombian supporters could cancel their trips to Bologna and Milan, it was admitted that Valderrama was taking part in an elaborate April Fool gag based on the 'surprise news' that Michel Platini's France were to replace the South Americans in Italy.

In reality coach Francisco Maturana's men and their frizzy-haired general never had any reservations about the trip to Italy where they reached the second round before joining the list of Cameroon victims.

The finals also signalled a welcome change of direction for Valderrama. Since leaving Deportivo Cali two years ago to join Montpellier of France, his form had plumetted from the heights of his election as South America's Footballer of the Year after Colombia's third-place finish in the Copa America.

Valderrama's footballing instincts were honed in his native Santa Marta, a small town of some 130,000 inhabitants lapped by the Caribbean. Historically it was logical that one of Colombia's most celebrated soccer sons should hail from the locality widely considered to be the cradle of the country's football – back at the end of the last century the game was popularized courtesy of English sailors who docked at the local port.

Like the majority of youngsters in this idyllic spot in northern Colombia he spent all his waking hours subconsciously refining his soccer technique on the wide sandy beaches.

"I started organised football at school when I was nine," he recalls. "By the age of 15 I was a member of the district of Magdalena side and at 18 I was chosen for the national junior team which took part in the 1981 South American Championships in Ecuador."

That year was also notable for his first steps in professional football in the colours of the local Union Magdalena team. He still speaks fondly of his three years spent there and is particularly grateful to the trust placed in him by his first coach, Perfecto Rodriguez.

In 1984 that most prestigious of the nation's clubs, Millonarios of Bogota, made successful overtures. It seemed to be a highly desirably career move for the player dubbed 'El Pibe' (the little boy) but Valderrama never settled in Bogota, often complaining of the cold climate and the excesses of the city's sporting journalists.

An amiable separation between club and player became the inevitable order of the day after a season of frustration and he put pen to paper in favour of Deportivo Cali. Speaking in terms of a rebirth might be considered an exaggeration, but the change of scenery certainly provoked an upturn in Valderrama's form as he responded to the more attacking football philosophy of Yugoslav manager, Vladimir Popovic.

Although only averaging a goal every three games, he shone as the architect of all his side's forward movements, rarely wasting a pass.

Called-up for national team duty in 1985 by manager – Pacho' Maturana, Valderrama swiftly graduated to the status of Colombian idol, a wholly conspicuous figure thanks to his frizzy locks and stylish ball-playing ability.

By 1988 he had decided to trade on his glowing reputation and become his country's first soccer export to Europe. Barcelona, Lazio, Sampdoria and Olympiakos were among the clubs to vie for his services, but shortly before thrilling an appreciative Wembley crowd in Colombia's 1-1 draw with England, it was announced that he was bound for French club, Montpellier for a fee close to £1 million.

"I am aware that I will be a sort of ambassador for Colombian football," said Valderrama at the time of the transfer. "I want to show that my country can produce players capable of succeeding in Europe and that Colombian football deserves respect."

However if he was the overseas representative of his country, his position as honorary counsel in Montpellier was often precarious. Adaptation to French football proved to be a long and painful process for Valderrama.

Then while the Colombian spent part of his first season kicking his heels on the bench, it transpired that he had been purchased on the insistence of club president Louis Nicollin and that manager Pierre Mosca was not exactly an enthusiastic advocate of the transfer.

Montpellier subsequently placed him on the transfer list and Colombia's Atletico Nacional of Medellin attempted to bring the playmaker home for their Libertadores Cup campaign, a move instantly scuppered by Deportivo Cali – Valderrama's old club – who effected their right to veto his transfer to any Colombian club apart from themselves.

Still at Montpellier this last term, the colourful 28-year-old looked more convincing, a self-renewal accelerated by Colombia's qualification for only their second World Cup finals appearance.

Hopefully he can build on his World Cup success as he built on his Copa America triumph three years ago.

FRANCESCOLI: Lost in Italy

AS his name suggests Uruguayan maestro Enzo Francescoli can boast of Italian lineage, his grandfather hailing from the town of Novara near Milan.

Not that this was much help at the World Cup – where Francescoli was too often a lonely figure, trapped in a no-man's land between an uninspired midfield and an out-of-form attack.

The end result was major disappointment for South America's 1984 Footballer of the Year. He had appeared to be running into form at the opportune moment, rejuvenated as a result of his transfer last autumn to Marseille after finally having his wish granted to quit Racing Paris.

In many respects, he suffered from the torrent of plaudits showered upon him by critics at the time of his days with the Montevideo club, Wanderers and then at River Plate. No-one could doubt his velvet touch, the acceleration and elusive quality with the ball at his feet, but parallels with Pele, Maradona and Cruyff were gratuitous and ultimately put him at a disadvantage.

"It is absurd to compare me with those greats," he says. "I have not yet proved on the field that I belong in such company."

The Francescoli story is no definitive rags-to-riches tale of a poor South American boy. Born on November 12, 1961, in Montevideo to a middle-class family, he studied at a private catholic school and became the prominent member of the San Francesco college soccer team in the Sales suburb of the Uruguayan capital.

At 14 he signed for the football-crazed city's Wanderers club, one of 13 First Division sides to be found in Montevideo, immediately cultivating the image of a dribbling phenomenon. Assuming the position of midfield schemer, in 1978 he found the route to goal 23 times in 30 appearances.

The start of a new decade saw the frail 18-year-old make an auspicious first-team debut for the Wanderers, followed a year on by a starring performance in Ecuador as Uruguay conquered the South American Junior championship.

His seemingly inexhaustible range of technical qualities, coupled with his unique brand of acrobatic goal poaching, rendered inevitable a promotion to full international honours.

A debut strike in February 1983 against Yugoslavia in a Nehru Cup tie in Calcutta brought him instant popularity. A few months later he had become a fully-fledged national hero thanks to a goal in the 1983 Copa America final when Uruguay upset Brazil.

At around the same time Wanderers were engaged in the opening rounds of the Copa Libertadores, but Francescoli was to play in just two matches. A growing reputation had filtered across Uruguayan borders and, among other European sides, Milan sent representatives to Montevideo to watch him in action, but finally plumped to sign the ill-fated duo of Eric Gerets and Luther Blissett.

Instead Wanderers president, Mateus Giri accepted an offer from Argentinian institution, River Plate, and so in April 1983 the prodigal son embarked to Buenos Aires.

Strike

His career at the Monumental could certainly have begun in more favourable fashion as injury and then a players' strike after the club had failed to meet its wages bill, worked to restrict his opportunities. Yet in a struggling River side he still managed 16 goals in both national and metropolitan championships.

The next season when playing as an out-and-out centre forward Francescoli topped the 1984-85 scoring charts courtesy of 24 goals as River improved to a fourth place finish in the Metropolitano. The following year he helped River Plate to their first title since 1980 with 25 goals.

Now labelled as a talent tip for export to Europe, he decided it was time to take the plunge.

Although he was in contact with Manchester United, he took the advice offered him by South Americans with knowledge of French football such as Hector Yazalde, Oswaldo Piazza and Venancio Ramos. Before heading for Mexico with the Uruguayan World Cup squad, he had signed a lucrative five year deal for the newly-promoted Racing Club of Paris for £2.4 million.

What was ultimately surprising was the fact that the Uruguayan should remain at the Parisian club for three long years. Time and time again, Francescoli seemed to use press interviews as classified advertisements, urging Italian clubs to come in for him.

He said: "Playing at the Parc des Princes when it is practically empty is so depressing."

However, Francescoli's overt signals were not heeded as Barcelona, Roma and Juventus baulked at the asking price. To his immense credit he invariably put his frustration behind him, averaging eleven goals per term and being adjudged the best foreign player in France in 1987.

Since making his name as part of Uruguay's Copa America success in 1983, his international fortunes have fluctuated, the nadir symbolised by the 1986 World Cup, where his nation left only a legacy of sterile football, bruises and cautions.

A year later he was an influential figure of the national side which retained its continental crown in Argentina, although he participated in only the opening 25 minutes of the final after being sent-off for retaliation, lashing out at the Chilean, Toro.

Francescoli is the big star who has yet to prove the man for the big occasion.

A crowd of over 100,000 welcomed the England squad back to Luton.

New England manager Graham Taylor has inherited the nucleus of a very good team.

English football finds a brave new world

BY DERICK ALLSOP

ENGLISH football rides into the new season on a wave of optimism and unashamed patriotic fervour.

An unlikely World Cup success story and a return to European competition – albeit limited – have given the game in the old country its biggest boost for years. Suddenly English players are said to be the multi-million pound targets of the Continent's top clubs and English fans are seen as largely decent, sporting people.

Now it is up to the players and fans of Manchester United and Aston Villa to preserve and even enhance that hard-earned reputation in the European Cup-Winners Cup and UEFA Cup respectively.

This extraordinary change in mood and stature took place between mid-June and early July, some of the most crucial weeks in the history of English football. During that period the widely anticipated World Cup horror show became a fairytale. The ending wasn't perfect, but it was happy enough.

Italia '90 opened predictably for Bobby Robson's squad. They looked woefully inept against the Republic of Ireland yet somehow managed to stumble on to top their group.

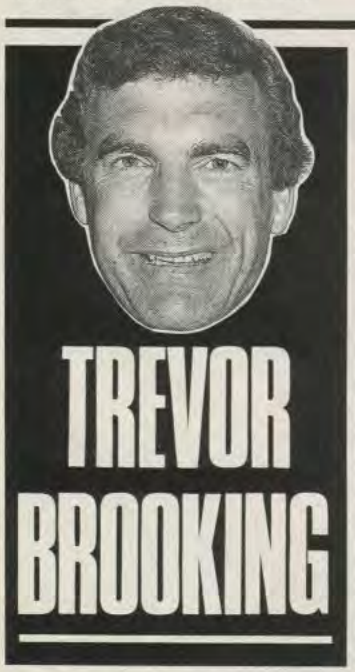
Gradually a new-look England was taking shape. Captain Bryan Robson went home with another injury and Mark Wright came in as a sweeper. The side had their share of good fortune against Belgium and Cameroon, but lost their semi-final to West Germany only on the grossly unsatisfactory penalty shoot-out.

They were beaten by Italy in the play-off for third place, though their football, their behaviour and their reception made it a thoroughly worthwhile exercise.

A Fair Play certificate may seem meagre consolation from the sport's premier competition, but given the precarious position of the English game going into the tournament it represented a badge of significant triumph.

So who were the players who gave England their best World Cup performance on foreign soil and enabled Bobby Robson to leave his post with dignity? Wright, certainly. He had an outstanding season for Derby so his form should not have surprised anyone in the camp. To his ability in the air, his courage and his mobility he has added maturity.

Des Walker's consistency is now taken for granted at home but for much of the global audience his pace and precise tackling made him a revelation. The real charmer, however, was Paul Gascoigne. You still have the uneasy feeling that the clown may take over at any moment, but he proved an entertainer can still be devastating. His infectious enthusiasm is as important as his tight control and killing through-ball. He did, unfortunately, appear to catch the diving bug towards the end of



TREVOR BROOKING

Don't judge Taylor too soon!

NO sooner had the dust settled on the World Cup in Italy, than the players who took part were already switching their thoughts towards the approaching domestic season ahead.

It will mean many of them having no summer break from training at all, and so some club managers must be a little anxious about key members of the team suffering tiredness and staleness at some stage in the months ahead.

The success of England and the Republic of Ireland in Italy created huge excitement and interest, which has guaranteed the new Football League season an enthusiastic opening.

On top of that Graham Taylor has been appointed the new England manager, and Manchester United and Aston Villa find themselves leading our clubs back into European Competition.

Ironically Taylor takes over from Bobby Robson at a time when the departing manager had reached his most successful and popular spell during his eight year reign.

He was delighted to leave on such a high note but by doing so, has in fact made his successor's task of reshaping the squad more difficult.

There is now an air of expectancy amongst supporters that England will continue to progress from their experience this Summer.

Group ties

It will be important for people not to start making judgments too early although he will realise the importance of qualifying for the European Championships in 1991, which means winning a group that includes Turkey, Poland and yet again Eire.

Graham Taylor also witnessed in Italy the introduction of the sweeper formation which is a system he would have undoubtedly introduced into the national team anyway.

It is a style that brought Aston Villa towards the top of the First Division, and one they will look forward to using in the UEFA Cup this season.

The controlled re-entry of just two English clubs is a sensible compromise and hopefully will be the springboard for the further development of many of our younger players in the future.

It would be an additional boost to the English game if both sides managed a lengthy run in the competitions, especially as it would increase the chances of adding to our representation in the following seasons.

The involvement of Manchester United and Aston Villa in Europe may unknowingly deflect their chances of League Championship success, leaving North London or Merseyside as the more likely winners.

In Paul Gascoigne and Gary Lineker Spurs have two of England's leading World Cup heroes and "Gazza" in particular seems to have taken everyone by storm.

It will certainly leave him a marked man for most matches, and it will be difficult for him to perform consistently to the level he has now set himself.

the tournament and we must hope he is restored to full health in time for the new season.

Gascoigne is, without question, a player of exceptional talent and vital to England's future. No-one thrived on his contribution in Italy more than Gary Lineker, who rediscovered much of the sharpness he had in Mexico.

Robson handed over the England reins to Graham Taylor saying: "Gascoigne was the best young player of the World Cup. He is special, someone around whom the new manager can build his side." Gascoigne now finds himself talked about as a £6m star, his name linked with a number of leading clubs in Italy and other European countries. So much for the player who couldn't be trusted!

Another man who made good use of Gascoigne's service was David Platt. His last minute volley on the turn beat Belgium and earned a place in the quarter-finals. Two splendid headers emphasised Platt's credentials as an excellent successor to Bryan Robson.

Bravery

England's anchor was, not for the first time, Peter Shilton. His reflexes, judgement and bravery silenced those who suggested that at 40 he was no longer worthy of his place.

His lapse in the play-off match scarcely mattered. There was, quite frankly, no better goalkeeper in the tournament. He had established a record of 125 international appearances and arrived at the perfect point to annouce his retirement from the England team. He will, though, continue playing for Derby in the First Division.

Shilton said: "I have had a great time but I have always wanted to finish at the top. It would have been fantastic to have won the tournament, a dream come true. But even if we had I would have announced the same decision."

Robson said: "He has proved yet again at the very highest level that he is one of the greatest goalkeepers we have ever seen. There has been no-one better in Italy. His achievement of 125 caps is remarkable. In my time as manager he has been one of the great members of the team. He's been a terrific inspiration to everybody."

There were tributes for all the team at the end of Italia '90. The dancing in the stands of the magnificent stadia did not prepare the players for the welcome back home. A crowd estimated at more than 100,000 awaited their return to Luton. Gascoigne said: "What a fantastic way to end a terrific campaign."

It was the behaviour of England's followers in Italy which tilted the balance for the readmission of English clubs to Europe. There were occasional outbreaks of trouble, but on the whole Englishmen on and off the field showed the acceptable face of the nation.

The Government supported the clubs and UEFA confirmed the inclusion of two clubs – United and Villa – in this season's competitions. Liverpool are not due to return for another three years, though that situation may be reassessed next year.

All now depends on the behaviour of the United and Villa fans. They can keep the doors open, or cause it to be slammed in the faces of English clubs for at least another five years.

UEFA have issued no conditions for re-entry, but the Government, the FA and the clubs themselves, encouraged by events in Italy, are drawing up plans to curb the hooligans. The then Sports Minister Colin Moynihan wants an alcohol ban, all-ticket matches and measures to prevent fans travelling to away legs.

Moynihan described the UEFA decision as "the dawning of a new era for football." He went on: "We have encouraged both Aston Villa and Manchester United to do everything they can to deter their supporters from travelling to away fixtures."

Screens

United, the first English club to win the European Cup 22 years ago, will erect giant screens at their Old Trafford stadium to show their away matches. Chairman Martin Edwards said: "We will encourage our fans not to travel. We will set an example that will be hard to beat. We will not let anyone down."

Villa chairman Doug Ellis said: "This is fantastic not only for our club but for the whole of English football and Europe. I don't think you could have two better clubs than Aston Villa and Manchester United, two established, traditional clubs with experience in Europe, to be the first ones to go back."

United set out on the Cup-Winners Cup trail with a tie against the Hungarian side, Pecsi Munkas, while Villa, also at home in the first leg, meet Banik Ostrava of Czechoslovakia in the UEFA Cup.

Swindon Town, the club promoted to the First Division only to be relegated to the Third because of financial irregularities, will in fact be playing in the Second again this season. The FA came up with the compromise solution after a 7 and a half hour meeting. Sunderland were confirmed as a First Division side but Tranmere were told they must stay in the Third.

His team's Division One hopes will depend on more defensive stability than last season and less frailty in front of their own supporters at White Hart Lane.

Neighbours Arsenal have bolstered their already solid defence with David Seaman and Andy Linighan, but most surely start scoring more goals to reclaim the title.

Liverpool remain favourites to keep the trophy although the form of John Barnes is a vital part of that target.

Talented

Many people were disappointed with him in Italy, but I still believe he is one of our most talented players and I expect Graham Taylor to manage somehow to transfer his club exploits into the international scene.

In recent seasons Everton have been overshadowed by their illustrious neighbours and I still cannot see them developing sufficient consistency to emerge as contenders yet.

The only other notable challenge is Nottingham Forest, but they seem to lack sufficient scoring potential to sustain the necessary wins.

Elsewhere most World Cup followers will automatically keep an eye on the Italian league as so many of the top players now play club football there.

Inter Milan will be hoping West Germany's victory can spur them to overhaul A.C. Milan as they both strive for the prestigious league title.

The latter's dominance of the European Cup has been impressive and with Baresi, Donadoni and the Dutch trio in their line up they must start favourites.

But what about Juventus? There must be great optimism there at the prospect of Schillaci and Baggio renewing the striking partnership that developed in the World Cup.

Both will face a good deal of pressure as supporters will expect Schillaci to score in every game, and Baggio to achieve the impossible by justifying his unrealistic transfer fee.

Finally, of course, there is Napoli and Maradona, Careca and Alemao who must overcome the disappointment of South America this summer.

Argentina's achievement in reaching the final was offset by the manner of their display when losing both the match and their pride.

So encouraging times for football generally.

All uphill now for Charlton

BY SEAN CREEDON

ITALIA '90 was probably the most joyous three weeks in the Republic of Ireland's history. The 'Boys in Green' kept the nation 'glued' to their television screens and pubs did great business.

Previous memorable events like the visits of the late John F Kennedy when President of the United States and Pope John Paul II paled into significance when compared to the triumphant homecoming afforded Jack Charlton and his squad.

Jack Charlton did remarkably well by getting the Republic to the quarter-final of the World Cup at their first attempt where they lost with dignity to hosts Italy. Charlton's problem is that the Irish, who for decades were used to life in the doldrums, have now got used to success. In his four years in charge Jack has got the Republic to the European Championships and World Cup finals. Now he has got to re-build.

Unfortunately Charlton has only one game in which to experiment before the 1992 European Championship gets under way against Turkey in October. That's a friendly against Morocco at Dalymount Park, Dublin on September 12.

Retiring?

At the time of writing none of the squad who travelled to Italy have announced their retirement. Kevin Moran, at 34 the oldest member of the team, is the only one who has intimated that he may retire. However, it looks like the end of the road also for other veterans such as Gerry Peyton, Chris Hughton and Frank Stapleton.

Charlton has a difficult task ahead. He took over a ready made team from Eoin Hand and introduced just two newcomers John Aldridge and Ray Houghton. Now he has to re-build, but says that there will only be gradual changes. Cambridge United's Liam Daish, who has impressed for the Irish B team is likely to be given a run in central defence and that would mean a continued exile for David O'Leary.

If the fans had their way Chris Morris's place at right-back would be under threat. However the Celtic defender had a reasonably good World Cup campaign, but his crossing is still not up to international standard. Manchester United's Denis Irwin will probably be given a chance to show what he can do. Steve Staunton looks safe at left back unless Jim Beglin can fight his way back.

Jack Charlton

Charlton has denied rumours of a row with Ronnie Whelan in Italy. Whelan insisted he was fit, but Jack still maintains that the player who would have been his captain was not fully recovered from the ankle injury he picked up in a League game against Arsenal last April. Charlton has said that a fit Ronnie Whelan would be an automatic choice in an Irish midfield, so who is going to be left out? The midfield quartet of Houghton, McGrath, Townsend and Sheedy all did well in Italy.

Sheedy's could be the one to lose out if Charlton can find another player in the Tony Galvin mould, somebody who takes the ball to the byline and get a good cross in. Portsmouth's Mark Kelly showed he can do this when he made his debut against Yugoslavia in April 1988, but since then has made only two senior appearances. John Sheridan must also come into the reckoning for midfield places as will Oldham's Mike Milligan.

But it's up front that the Irish have most problems. Tony Cascarino, who looked the number one choice for the main striking role is now being strongly challenged by Niall Quinn. John Aldridge's place must also be in doubt with Bernie Slaven and David Kelly likely to be given an opportunity to show that they can score goals.

After the highs of Euro '88 and Italia '90 it's going to take a supreme effort from the Irish to get the solitary qualifying spot for Sweden '92 from a group which includes England, Poland and Turkey.

Ray Houghton and Paul McGrath have a vital stake in Eire's future.

Rangers are still the ones to beat

BY ALAN FAIRLEY

Soviet defender Oleg Kuznetsov (left) and England striker Mark Hateley (below) have joined Rangers ... while Charlie Nicholas (right) has gone back to his old club Celtic.

THE advent of the new Scottish season crept up almost unnoticed.

That was thanks to the interest, admittedly short-lived, which was shown in this summer's World Cup and the ongoing saga pertinent to the proposed merger/take-over involving Hearts and Hibs.

It's all a marked contrast to the summer of 1989 when Rangers' dramatic signing of Maurice Johnston was sufficient to sustain the interest of all those connected with the game throughout the enforced period of inactivity and ensured a commensurate degree of anticipation prior to the August kick off.

Transfer activity in Scotland this summer has been especially low key, largely because of the World Cup and a pleasing reluctance by club managers to interfere with the fortunes of the national team.

Rangers, however, made their perfunctory foray into the market and secured Soviet defender Oleg Kuznetsov as well as former England international striker Mark Hateley from French club Monaco.

Hateley, whose nomadic father Tony played for a host of clubs during the 1960s, including Liverpool and Coventry City, had been a signing target for Rangers ever since Graeme Souness took over as manager in 1986. He began his career with Portsmouth and also experienced a spell in Italian football with Milan before moving to Monaco.

Hateley's presence in the Ibrox first team squad will serve to underline the main problem which faces a manager intent on building a strong playing pool, i.e. who to leave out of the team.

Assuming there are no injury worries, the two available places in the Rangers forward line will be filled by any two from Hateley, Johnston or Ally McCoist, one of whom would be required to either sit on the bench or play in the reserves, a situation which would undoubtedly be regarded as unacceptable by all concerned.

A similar position occured last year following Johnston's arrival, which resulted in Kevin Drinkell, hitherto a great favourite with the Rangers fans, leaving to join Coventry and stories are already beginning to circulate that McCoist will, this time, choose to continue his career elsewhere.

Across Glasgow at Parkhead, Celtic manager Billy McNeil has paid £650,000 to Arsenal for the services of Martin Hayes, an attacking midfielder who lost his place in the Highbury first team over the past two seasons.

Hayes appears determined to revitalise his career at Celtic Park and to retrieve hopes of international recognition with England, having been capped for his country at Under-21 level three years ago.

McNeile bought Scotland midfielder John Collins from Hibs and has signed Charlie Nicholas from Aberdeen. The former Arsenal striker who was, co-incidentally, a team mate of Martin Hayes at Highbury, will now commence his second spell with the Parkhead club but at the age of 28, he is unlikely to bear any resemblance to the talented, freescoring youngster who delighted the Celtic fans during the early 1980s.

In Edinburgh, the boardroom confrontation involving Hearts and Hibs was shelved temporarily as the Tynecastle club announced their signing of Derek Ferguson from Rangers.

Ferguson, who had been attached to Rangers since signing schoolboy forms as a 12 year old, is the type of player capable of injecting the necessary level of class into the Hearts midfield which could transform the team into potential trophy winners rather than perennial runners-up.

Regarded at one stage as Scotland's finest young footballing prospect, Ferguson's fortunes have faded in recent times, possibly due to continual rumours of disagreements with Rangers manager Graeme Souness and an apparent inability to handle the pressures of being an Ibrox first team player, which resulted in occasional reports of off-field disciplinary lapses.

Like Hayes, Ferguson will be looking to his new environment to provide a springboard for the relaunch of his footballing career.

One club to have attained a reputation for innovation over the past few seasons has been St. Johnstone, the Perth club having emerged as pioneers in the concept of ground relocation by moving into an impressive purpose built stadium on the outskirts of the city.

St Johnstone won the First Division championship in 1989/90 and their level of ambition has been reflected in the close season signing of Soviet international Sergei Baltacha from Ipswich.

Once again, Rangers appear to be the team who hold all the cards in the Scottish domestic set-up; it is difficult to ascertain whether any other club has the resources available to mount a sustained challenge to the recent dominance of Graeme Souness' side who will be looking not only to maintain their position as Premier League champions but to the possibility to establishing a reputation in Europe as the inevitability of a continental super league draws ever nearer.

Hearts foiled in bid for Hibs

BY ALAN FAIRLEY

Hearts chairman Wallace Mercer.

IT IS not easy to bring the City of Edinburgh to a standstill; the "Athens of the North", as it is colloquially known, is a bustling financial, commercial and cultural centre where life proceeds at a stately, if sometimes sedate pace, showing a reluctance to be disturbed or distracted by any developments which may jeopardise its stoicly structured routine.

On June 4, however, events took place which virtually ground the city to a halt; around 10 p.m. on that day, rumours began to circulate to the effect that Wallace Mercer, flamboyant chairman of Heart of Midlothian F.C., had, via the Stock Exchange, launched a bid to purchase the share capital of Hearts' city rivals Hibernian, with the intention of closing down the latter and creating a merged Edinburgh football team designed to challenge the domestic dominance of Glasgow's Rangers and Celtic.

Offices, factories, pubs, shops and schools throughout Edinburgh were immobilised by the news and, as the day wore on, rumour crystallised into fact via a series of press conferences which confirmed the news that every Hibs fan was dreading – Mercer did indeed intend to purchase, and subsequently pronounce the death sentence on, the Easter Road club.

By early evening, hundreds of Hibernian fans had congregated outside the Easter Road main stand, demanding answers to the numerous questions which had been formulating within their minds during the day.

Inside the ground, crisis talks were taking place involving David Duff, the Swindon-based lawyer who had become chairman of the club in 1988, Duff's brother-in-law Jim Gray, an Edinburgh builder who had assumed the role of managing director following Duff's appointment, and representatives of shareholders and supporters clubs, all of whom were anxious to ascertain whether Hibernian could remain in business.

Uncertainties concerning previous events involving the club were rapidly dragged to the surface, such as the controversial Third Market flotation in 1989, the subsequent decision of the parent company to purchase a chain of public houses in the West Country, and the unexplained role which had been played in the overall scenario by the mysterious and reclusive David Rowland, who had apparently masterminded the share issue and who had helped spark off current events by agreeing to sell his own 29.9 per cent stake in the club to Mercer, thereby giving the Hearts chairman a substantial base on which to formulate his proposed takeover.

But for all the probing questions being posed to the Hibernian management, it was Mercer who found himself on the receiving end of the invective which emanated from the unhappy Hibs support; menacing anti-Mercer graffiti had been posted all over Edinburgh and intimadatory threats were directed towards him and his family.

Midway through the episode an empty bullet casing was delivered to his luxury home and various derogatory pseudonyms were created.

There can be no doubt that Mercer underestimated the emotional response from the Hibs fans whilst planning what, to him, would have constituted no more than a normal everyday business transaction. But the effects which the reaction had on himself and his family may well have caused his eventual withdrawal from the bidding.

'Hands off'

Following the announcement of the takeover proposal. Hibs fans quickly mobilised and a "Hands off Hibs" campaign was rapidly generated, with the committee organising a rally at Easter Road where approximately 10,000 supporters turned up to hear emotive speeches from local politicians and former players, with the most heart-touching moment occuring when ex-England international Joe Baker, a favourite with the Hibs fans during the 1960s, fell to his knees in order to symbollically kiss the playing surface.

The rally ended with successful recording artists The Proclaimers leading the crowd in an emotional rendering of "You'll Never Walk Alone," and many supporters left the ground gazing wistfully at the surroundings, perhaps wondering if they would ever watch their team play there again.

As the month of June wore on, the story took on a number of bizarre twists, many of which were based on the quest for the true identities of the individuals who owned the bulk of the club's shares; a financial analyst revealed that only 10 per cent of the share capital was actually in the hands of Hibernian supporters with the remainder being spread amongst professional investors as far apart as the Middle East and New Zealand.

Hopes of the appearance of the proverbial "White Knight" were briefly raised when Tom Farmer, managing director of car accessory giant Kwik Fit, purchased a significant block of shares in the club but the financial jigsaw was overshadowed by some spectacular "mud slinging" between the main parties involved, with Mercer being particularly critical of the Hibernian management and its alleged lack of business acumen.

Mercer's 6th of July deadline ended with 63 per cent of Hibs shares in his hands; he still needed a further 13 per cent to give him sufficient power to close down the club and, with both sides claiming a moral victory, the would-be godfather of Edinburgh football extended the deadline by two more weeks – in vain, much to the delight of Hibs fans.

Whether this is the end of the matter altogether, however, is another story...

Palace manager Steve Coppell ... a future England manager?

NOW, AS I WAS

Were Palace really the only ones to blame?

The Brian Glanville COLUMN

THE World Cup has a tendency to sweep away and submerge everything else in football, so I must crave your forgiveness in returning to anything as marginal in those two recent FA Cup Finals; and to ask whether Crystal Palace were really guilty as charged.

The picture represented after that repugnant Thursday evening affair at Wembley is that Palace went from the start to intimidate and maltreat Manchester United, who persisted in playing all the football that was played over the ninety minutes.

Mark Bright, allegedly, was lucky not be sent off. Steve Coppell, a hero and a potential England team manager only the previous Saturday, was not a discredited figure, who had put a bunch of thugs on the field.

A monumental over-simplification. I felt so at the time, watching from the Wembley Press Box. I felt so all the more when speaking, some days later, to a respected colleague on a tabloid daily, who spoke with disgust of what he had seen, so clearly shown, on television.

There, he said, it was perfectly plain to see that United themselves were no angels. The very expressions on their faces as they constantly harangued the referee, the ill grace and lack of goodwill manifest throughout. The impression that my informant got, he told me, was that for the recklessness of Bright's early charge of Les Sealey, the keeper was not badly or painfully injured, as to some it may have seemed. He said a good deal more, but that will have to suffice.

My own view was that much of the analysis of the second, admittedly deplorable, Cup Final was superficial. In the first place, you could not take it on its own; it had to be related to the first game, and above all to the inadequate refereeing of Mr. Gunn.

He never succeeded in imposing his authority of either match, and I cannot, will not, accept the view expressed to me by another colleague that it is players not referees who are responsible in such circumstances, players not referees "who do kicking". Gunn Law, if you can call it that, supervenes when referees are weak and inadequate, when players feel a: that they will not receive justice, b: that they can away with things.

Mr Gunn's refereeing was at times bewildering. United's first equalising goal, in the initial game, was a travesty of justice. Palace were moving forward when Andy Gray was monumentally blocked by Steve Bruce. Mr Gunn was not far away, but he did nothing about it. The move, inevitably broke down, away came United, Wallace passed to McClair on the right, and from the consequent cross, Bryan Robson squeezed in the equaliser off Pardew.

Thereafter, the game was both ill natured and undistinguished, brought to life only by the super opportunism of Ian Wright, when he eventually came on. Palace should really have won it, but they flagged at the end, when just about deserved their equaliser. But the result was substantially falsified by that wretched early decision. Or lack of one.

So to the wretched return. Was Palace's approach intimidatory from the start? I make no excuses for them. Whether Sealey was or was not hurt by Mark Bright's challenge, it was a reckless and lamentable one. In the second half, there was another when Sealey clearly had the ball, and there was no case for following through.

There was also a challenge on Bryan Robson for which reckless was probably a euphemism. But then again, some of Robson's own challenges were scarcely gentle.

Then there was Pardew. He seemed a man possessed, his attitude inexplicably provocative. Yet what of United's Wallace, always ready to respond in kind. At the end, it was Wallace who taunted Palace by refusing to let them have the ball, behaviour which could well have had a much graver sequel than it did.

And Coppell? The implication was that he had at least turned a blind eye to, at worst assented in, Palace's harsh methods from the start of the replay. It doesn't fit with anything I know about him. I still think he is one of the most gifted of our younger managers and that he worked wonders with what was essentially a rag, tag and bobtail team.

His tactics brought an astonishing victory over Liverpool, in the semi-final, one of the most extraordinary results in the post-war history of the FA Cup. His tactics in the first Final were fascinating, too. First, the man to man smothering of the United midfield, with Shaw, usually a left-back, on Neil Webb, Pardew on Bryan Robson, Salako, most unexpectedly, at left-back. After all, he is essentially a forward.

Then the entry of Ian Wright, so long out of action after twice breaking a leg, and the grand transformation scene. Salako moved up into midfield, where he could attack, Shaw reverting to left back. More room for Robson and Webb, but a change, too, for Palace to take on the eternally suspect United defence. Two goals from Wright; a near victory.

And the return. Should there have been a penalty when Thomas was felled, in the box, by Brian McClair? What of the grotesque foul by Bruce when Salako, on the left, neatly went round him, only for Bruce, now on the ground, to reach out a leg and bring him down. Mr Gunn was no more than a few yards away, but his whistle didn't blow. Why not?

I still believe that a powerful, authoritative referee would have seen to it that these Cup Finals did not reach the depths they did. As for Coppell, perhaps the worst you can say of him is that he is a realist to a degree.

As a player, his career brutally cut short by a spiteful Hungarian foul, he was the epitome of technique, intelligence, unselfishness. There is little doubt he would like his Palace team to play "real" football, still less

United's replacement 'keeper Les Sealey is down but not beaten in the FA Cup Final replay against Crystal Palace.

SAYING...

doubt that he does not believe they can. So even the reserves, one is told, are discouraged from trying anything ambitious, urged to get the ball forward as fast as possible. Coppell is sceptical of his team's abilities.

There is good reason for this. With the exception of Martyn in goal, Salako, the versatile attacker-midfielder-defender, Andy Gray, a most accomplished midfielder, and the two rapid strikers, Wright and Bright, the team is exceedingly short of skill. Even if a 4-0 defeat in Trinidad, soon after the two Cup Finals, may be written off as a freak.

Coppell is an intelligent young man, once such an excellent footballer, with an economics degree, and the ability to turn his mind cogently to football problems; problems, he admits, which are far greater than he ever imagined when he took Palace over at the age of 34.

Admirable

An interesting story lies behind that appointment, and the admirable. Gordon Taylor, secretary of the PFA who should now be chief executive of the League instead of Arthur Whatchamacallit, plays a salient role.

Ron Noades, who had tried various quoted managers in his time, needed a new one. Taylor proposed Coppell, not long retired after a vicious kick on the knee by a Hungarian defender at Wembley, a desperate but unsuccessful effort to regain fitness, in Holland. Noades replied that Coppell had no experience. "You haven't done too well with experience," said Taylor, drily. Noades took Coppell recommended by Busby and Greenwood and the rest is history.

With Bobby Robson at long last, Hallelujah, on his way (why didn't it happen in 1988?) Coppell could have been a strong candidate for the succession, as England's manager, even if he says he doesn't want it. Instead his name has not even figured on the bookmakers' list, and there was never a chance he would be appointed.

Graham Taylor is the successor – a most accomplished club manager, an excellent talker, a man prepared to learn from is successes, as well as from his failures. He is far better, more flexible, manager than he was all those years ago when he made such a hash of managing the England youth team. England, who had dominated the European championship for years, were playing in their own backyard, but didn't come near to winning.

At Watford he latched on to Wing Commander Reep's 1950s ideas and went for the long ball game. Whatever they or anybody else say or said, Reep was the grand progenitor. Or, if you so prefer it, the one to blame.

Having defended his long ball theories with enormous passion, Taylor, who had done well at Lincoln, astonishingly well at Watford, whom he lifted from the Fourth Division to second place in the First and runners up in the FA Cup Final, went to Aston Villa.

There, he has quite often demonstrated a pleasing tactical flexibility; and of late, what you might call flexibility to a fault. His three centre back plan worked very well for some three quarters of the season for Villa, until alas Derek Mountfield was hurt and dropped out. Then Villa had to abandon it. Another ploy, switching the lanky striker Ormondroyd to the left wing, worked very well, too. Nor was Taylor afraid to vary the tactics when he felt that circumstances demanded it.

Towards the end of the season, however, he seemed to have a rush of blood to the head. Suddenly he went out and bought Tony Cascarino, perhaps in a fit of nostalgia for the good old days at Watford when the ball was banged up the middle to a giant centre-forward; such as Jenkins or Reilly.

Cascarino is a player I admire, but you have to set him the proper context. He would indeed probably have flourished in a Watford attack. He certainly did, for a long time, at Millwall, with Teddy Sheringham so usefully beside him. But Villa had to throw their previous tactics out of the window. They were aught betwixt and between, as Taylor's honest post-match musings displayed. They waned and flagged.

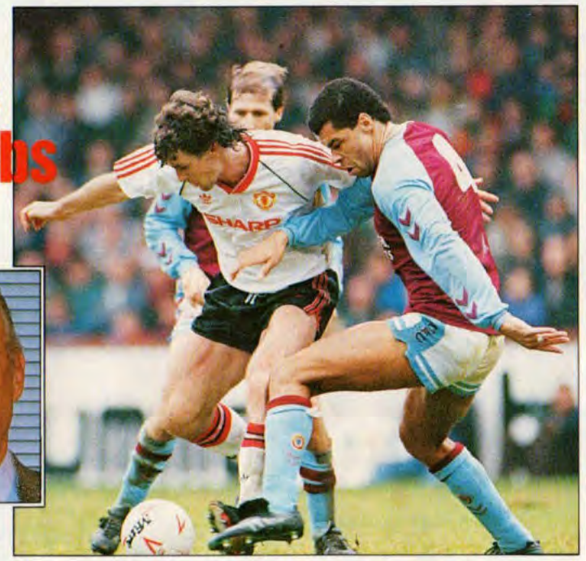
Taylor's European experience is limited to a brief UEFA Cup run by Watford. Coppell played many times for England, was bright enough to learn from the experience, and devotedly attends international tournaments abroad.

Terry Venables used to be my favourite, but he's not been the same man for a few seasons now, and besides, the Old Councillor Williams of the FA would never wear him. Howard Kendall, they might. Of all the candidates suggested, he has by far the most impressive record. He was a great success with Everton, he was at Bilbao for two seasons, he is an intelligent tactician and a good judge of a player. Then he said no. All of which meant that we got Taylor.

And Bobby Robson? PSV presumably know what they are doing. It is hard to discern anything in his recent record to suggest quite what they see. But there we are, right at the very top, nothing succeeds like failure. Why should that not be good for football, too?

No holds barred as United skipper Bryan Robson and Andy Gray go in boots first.

Havelange warning as English clubs fly out



Aston Villa and Manchester United are welcome back in Europe ... but not their fans.

BY KEIR RADNEDGE

FIFA president Joao Havelange is too wily a bird to allow himself to be trapped into an unguarded comment on someone else's business. So he was his usual diplomatic self when he was asked in Rome if English clubs should be allowed back into European competition.

In replying Havelange pointed out what may yet prove the crux of an issue which will not go away merely because UEFA have opened up the doors to Manchester United in the Cup-winners'Cup and Aston Villa – with new boss Josef Venglos – in the UEFA Cup.

Havelange said: "UEFA are responsible for this decision. But it seems to me only right to allow English clubs back into competition if the other European countries can provide the sort of security levels maintained in Italy for the World Cup."

Of course, they cannot.

Italy mobilised every unit of its security and police forces – from the motorway police up. They also made use of officers seconded from foreign forces. In Verona, for instance, it was not unusual to hear ostensibly 'Italian' uniformed policemen talking to each other in Flemish. Italy also had one month's concentrated security target and had known all about what would be expected for the five previous years.

In the three European club competitions police will have only a matter of weeks to draw up their plans. The sale of tickets – however hard the clubs try – cannot be foolproof enough to keep the English out; and, on practical and political grounds, there can be no question of the alcohol ban which worked so well in Italy.

Liverpool must wait for their own return to Europe: UEFA could hardly have scrapped their extra penalty after having turned down appeals earlier this year from suspended Ajax Amsterdam and Hajduk Split.

Bye for Milan

UEFA 's revamped seeding system appears to have worked well enough to keep most of the giants apart. In the Champions' Cup holders Milan have a bye, thus providing Ruud Gullit with a little extra time to attain match fitness and providing Marco Van Basten with a little extra time to regain the form which deserted him in the World Cup.

Grasshoppers of Switzerland will be unhappy at having to face Red Star Belgrade, Ujpest Dozsa may struggle against Sparta Praha and Gordon Milne's Besiktas may come unstuck at the first hurdle provided by Malmo. Surprise Polish champions Lech Poznan may themselves struggle against ambitious Panathinaikos.

Marseille, Porto, Real Madrid, Rangers, Bayern Munich, Napoli should all have comfortable rides.

The same may be said, in the Cup-winners' Cup, about Manchester United, Aberdeen, Steaua, Barcelona, Juventus and Kiev. But Montpellier are worried at the prospect of facing Bobby Robson's PSV Eindhoven, and holders Sampdoria may consider themselves unlucky to have been drawn against Kaiserslautern.

UEFA Cup favourites include Eintracht Frankfurst, Koln, Leverkusen, and Anderlecht. An unlucky kink in the seeding system means Roma face Benfica – weakened by the poaching of Italian clubs including Roma, who bought Brazil defender Aldair from the Lisbon Eagles.

Finally, two issues hedged as deeply with uncertainty as the likely behaviour of English fans: will Albania's clubs withdraw from all three competitions because of the domestic political unrest? And which East German club will best mark their last independent international foray? Dresden (Champions' Cup), Schwerin (Cup-winners' Cup) and Magdeburg and Chemnitz (UEFA Cup) could end up outlasting their own country!

THE DRAW

CHAMPIONS CUP
BYE: Milan (holders)
Akureyi v CSCA Sofia
Bayern Munich v Apoel (Cyp)
Dinamo Bucharest v St Patricks (RI)
Lech Poznan v Panathinaikos
Lillestrom (Nor) v Club Bruge (Bel)
Malmo v Besiktas (Tur)
Marseille v Dinamo Tirana
Porto v Portadown (NI)
Rangers v Valletta
Real Madrid v Odsense (Den)
Red Star (Yug) v Grasshopper (Swz)
Sparta Praha v Ujpest Dozsa (Hun)
Tirol v Kuusysi Lahti (Fin)
Union Luxembourg v Dynamo Dresden
Napoli v Upjest

CUP-WINNERS' CUP
Preliminary round:
Bray Wanderers (RI) v Trabzonspor (Tur)
First round:
Bray or Trabzonspor v Barcelona
Estrela do Amadora (Por) v Neuchatel Xamax (Swz)
Famagusta (Cyprus) v Aberdeen
Fram Reykjavik v Djurgadens
Glentoran v Steaua Bucharest
Kaiserslautern v Sampdoria (holders)
Kiev Dynamo v Kuopio (Fin)
Legia Warsaw v Swift Hesperange (Lux)
Manchester United v Pecsi Munkas (Hungary)
Montepellier (Fr) v PSV Eindhoven
Olympiakos (Gr) v Flamurtari (Alb)
Schwerin (EG) v FK Austria
Sliema W (Mal) v Dukla Praha
Sliven(Bul) v Juventus
Viking (Norway) v FC Liege
Wrexham (Wal) v Lyngby (Den)

UEFA CUP
First round:
Anderlecht v Petrolul Ploiesti
Antwerp v Ferencvaros
Aston Villa v Banik Ostrava
Atalanta v Dinamo Zagreb
Avenir Beggen (Lux) v Inter Bratislava (Cz)
Bayer Leverkusen v Twente Enschede
Borussia Dortmund v Chemnitz
Broendby (Den) v Eintracht Frankfurt
Chernomorets Odessa v Rosenborg Trondheim
Dnepr v Hearts
Dundee Unt v Hafnarfjardar (Ice)
Fenerbahce v Vitoria Guimaraes
GKS Katowice (Pol) v TPs (Fin)
Glenavon (NI) v Bordeaux
Hibernian (Mal) v Partizan (Yug)
Iraklis Salonika v Valencia
Lausanne v Real Sociedad
Magdeburg v RoPs Fin)
MTK/VM (Hun) v Luzern
Norrkoeping v Koln
Partizani Tirana v Universitatea Craiova
Politehnica Timisoara v Atletico Madrid
Rapid Vienna v Internazionale
Roda Kerkrade v Monaco
Roma v Benfica
Sevilla v PAOK Salonika
Slavia Sofia v Omonia (Cyp)
Sporting Lisbon v Mechelen
Torpedo Moscow v GAIS Gothenburg
Vejle (Den) v Admira Wacker
Zaglebie Lubin v Bologna

Giants AC Milan and Real Madrid want the format of the European Cup changed.

Superleague pressure won't go away

BY ARTHUR ROTMIL

IF THE big clubs get their way – and they usually do – then the present format of the European Cup will be drastically changed to pave the way for a European League to start around 1993.

Top clubs such as Real Madrid and Milan in particular, are said to be behind the project because they are fed up with playing the minnows and not earning enough money, or being drawn against other super teams in the early rounds and suffering the indignity of a premature exit.

Apparently UEFA, in principle are opposed to any plan which could prove detrimental to the small clubs, are now resigned to a new formula and even the formation of a European league. One initial proposal was to divide the 32 national league champions and 32 cup winners (or those qualified), into eight groups of four, each one headed by a seeded club. They would play each other home and away in these sections with the winners advancing into the quarter-finals; from then on the tournament would continue on a normal cup basis.

Upset

The prime mover is Real Madrid's president Ramon Mendoza who is upset because his club have been paired in recent early rounds with Napoli and Milan.

The project has the backing of Milan president Silvio Berlusconi, perhaps the most influential man in Italy. This media-czar can see extraordinary earnings potential from the additional group matches and the guaranteed clashes between the best teams in the latter stages. From such a new structure, and after a trial period, a European league would eventually be born.

The general secretary of UEFA, Gerd Aigner, is not keen on the project, but he realises that money will in the end prove the irresistible bait for the vast majority of the clubs. Knowing the groupings well in advance would help clubs sell television rights and clinch all the advertising, promotion and sponsorship deals.

Berlusconi, who employs 26,000 people and boasts a budget of £800 million, last year instructed his associate company Fininvest to secure, from 70 clubs all over Europe, provisional TV rights for a total of £2.5 million – without knowing who would play whom.

When the last season's European draw was made the opponents of Italian clubs had already been signed up. Matches like HJK Helsinki v AC Milan, Sporting Lisbon v Napoli and Spartak Moscow v Atalanta Bergamo were thus "secured" for Berlusconi's TV channels serving some 35 million Italian viewers, while the state TV station RAI was left.

While those three clubs, who received Italian rivals, were paid £34,000 each, the remaining 67 clubs (not Italian opponents), each collected £6,800 without having to make any effort at all.

Support

UEFA has advised clubs that any initiative on re-structuring must come from the national FAs. Already support has come from Holland.

Jacques Ruts, the president of PSV Eindhoven, but speaking also for Ajax, Feyenoord and Twente, wants the Dutch representative with UEFA to put forward the new ideas to the European Union's Executive Committee.

Now Aigner is admitting that by 1995 the European Cup may have a different format. He is worried that the smaller clubs and others from Russia and Scandinavia, who are handicapped by the long winter break and usually lose money from the early rounds in Europe, will object to any changes.

UEFA already operate a fund specially for clubs losing money. They can be compensated by claiming up to 60 per cent of their deficit which is covered by UEFA, who estimate the costs of this operation at £400,000 a year.

But the big boys have thought of that too. They will donate 20 per cent of the overall profits to help the minnows.

FAROES JOIN THE EUROPEAN PYRAMID

BY JIM HOLDEN and NICK BIDWELL

THE strangest soccer outpost in the continent could decide the fate of the 1992 European Championships.

The tiny Faroe Islands, population only 46,000, have been admitted to an international tournament for the first time and will compete in group four of the qualifiers against three of the best teams in Europe; Yugoslavia, Denmark and Austria.

The Faroes, of course, have no chance of success. It will be the amount of goals they concede to each nation which may well determine the outcome of a close group. The fishermen footballers will not even be able to play their historic first home matches on their islands dotted out in the north Atlantic, because they have no suitable stadia with grass pitches.

Instead they are likely to play their games in Sweden, where the 1992 finals will be held.

The obvious place they would have turned to was Denmark. The Faroes are a part of the Danish kingdom, like Greenland, only now gaining a degree of political and sporting autonomy. That the draw pitted the Faroes against Denmark was irony indeed. The islanders had initially planned to stage home matches in Aalborg, Denmark, but that would hardly be agreed now by the other group rivals.

Whether being drawn against the Faroes will help or hinder the new young Danish side remains to be seen. It will probably hinder them because there could hardly be a more symbolic game for the islanders on their first foray into world soccer. It will be the vital game for honour to be upheld.

The Danes will not now be managed by Sepp Piontek, but he had some interesting comments about the footballers from the Faroes, whom he has helped with coaching in the past. Piontek said: "They are about the standard of the Danish second division, which is not going to frighten international sides. But because they play all their football on artificial turf they do have good technical skills.

"Their football is very much based on the Danish style rather than the British, even though the Islands are closest to Scotland geographically. A lot of Danish coaches have been out there, and it would be unwise for anyone to take them lightly."

The players will also certainly be a tough breed. You have to be to survive the harsh climate which makes artificial pitches necessary. They are all amateurs and mostly deep sea fishermen or sheep farmers. Incredibly for a nation competing against the very best, they have only 22 registered clubs and fewer than 3,000 players in total to choose from.

The Faroes Football Association was only founded in 1979, but chairman Torleif Sigurdsson says: "We are very proud of our nation and we hope to do the best we can in the championships. Of course we are not going to win anything, but the money which we can raise from competing will help us to expand for the future."

The immediate aim is to win revenue from television and advertising hoardings to finance the construction of a stadium with a grass pitch so that they can play home games on the islands if they are admitted to the next World Cup tournament. Advertising revenue from the match against Denmark could earn more than £200,000 alone. Only a draw against Italy would have been more lucrative.

The Faroes owe a great deal to Denmark (red shirts) their European Championship opponents.

Sigurdsson adds: "It is a great privilege for us to be admitted to the tournament and to be drawn against Denmark was amazing. I could hardly believe it.

"We owe them a great deal in the development of football here, but I can promise that we won't be doing them any favours in the two matches. Everyone in the islands is looking forward to the games. In some ways it is the biggest thing to have happened to us. Certainly in sporting terms.

"I only hope that if we lose the margins are not too great. It would not help us for the future if we conceded so many goals that people started saying we shouldn't be allowed to take part. We cannot hope to improve unless we play against other countries in competitive matches and it will take us time to find our feet, I'm sure."

Diversion

One thing that is for sure is that the Faroe Islands introduction to top-flight football will be a fascinating diversion in the next European Championships. You can bet that mediamen from all over the continent will descend on their games to find out about the unknown fishermen footballers from the north Atlantic.

Affiliated to FIFA in 1988 and granted full membership of UEFA in January this year, the Faroes are an archipelago composed of 22 islands of volcanic origin. The Faroese people of today are descendants of Norwegian settlers of the Viking age, but only since 1948 when Denmark allowed them home rule have the islanders tasted real autonomy.

The Faroes had been previously ruled by Norway, by joint Norwegian and Danish control and then by Denmark alone. In order to feed the mouths of its 44,000 population, the country's main activities are sheep farming (there are 70,000 sheep on the islands) and fishing, forms of labour which have changed little over the years.

As in so many parts of the globe, football in the Faroes was originally implanted in the local scene by British sailors who docked in the busy ports of Torshavn – where the quaint little Gundadular stadium is dwarfed by huge rock masses – Klaksvik and Tvoroyry at the latter part of the last century.

The honour of the first club to be founded was held by TB in 1892, followed in 1904 by the birth of HB and KI – virtually all Faroes sides are commonly known by their initials rather than by their elongated titles.

A fully-fledged championship only saw the light of day in 1942 with the participation of five clubs, whereas today its first division comprises ten teams, who compete in a Scandinavian-style season which lasts from March to September. In total the Faroes can boast of five divisions, as well as a developed youth structure.

Last term the championship race was won by the B71 club of the town of Sandur, while the country's other foremost sides include Klaksvikkar Itrot (KI), who have captured the league crown on a record number of 15 occasions and Havnar Boltfelag (HB) from Torshavn, who can claim 13 championship victories.

A recent development which should improve standards has been the injection of overseas players and currently starring are Iceland's Steintorsson (VB) and the Pole, Kniatowski at B71.

First win

The national team was created in 1930, but had to wait until 1948 for its first victory in a 4-1 win over Shetland. To date the Faroe Islands have played some 53 matches (mainly against neighbouring islands), recording in the process 22 victories, five draws and 26 defeats.

Notable among recent performances was a 1-0 home triumph in April last year over 1986 World Cup minnows Canada. National team chief, Pall Gudlangsson, an Icelander, is convinced that the opportunity to measure themselves in competitive action with Europe's best can only be beneficial to his charges.

He hopes others will be able to follow in the footsteps of defender Julian Hansen, who became the first native islander to sign for a foreign side when he joined Stenlose of Denmark.

NEWS FROM SOUTH AMERICA

FROM ERIC WEIL

Top internationals like Ruben Sosa were not allowed to play for their clubs because of the World Cup Finals.

Wanderers take advantage of World Cup problems

WANDERERS won the first of the season's Uruguayan tournaments to gain automatic entry into the end of season tournament to qualify for next year's Libertadores Cup.

The tournament was played without national team players preparing for the World Cup and Liverpool, joint second in the first round, and Nacional have yet to finish off a match suspended at 2-2.

Danubio won the tournament between six clubs which did not make the eight-team final round and by a new rule giving Nacional and Penarol – the big clubs hit most by international calls – an extra chance to make the end of season playoffs.

Danubio will play either Penarol (who finished fourth) or Nacional (a point behind), depending on the pending Liverpool – Nacional result, for another playoff place.

Earlier 20 players (plus two reserves) were sent off in a Nacional-Penarol clash which ended early with no score, but the referee got the worst of it.

Uruguayan league rules allow players to get off the first offence in a season by paying fines (usually paid by their clubs) so that most of them were fined between 35 and 175 dollars. Only Hector Moran (Nacional) and Sergio Peluffo (Penarol), who had been sent off before, were suspended for five and one games respectively. But referee Eduardo Deuniewski was suspended for six games for breaking a rule which does not allow referees to talk to the media about games they handle.

Qualifiers

This was the last round of the preliminary stage of the tournament in which the 14 first division clubs were divided into two groups from each of which the top four qualified for a final round. Nacional had already qualified, but Penarol needed a win to make sure.

All week the media, in interviews with players, had created a war climate and it was a physical match from the start. Ten minutes from the end Nacional midfielder Enrique Pena was sent off for rough play and was insulted by a rival as he was leaving the field. This started a free-for-all lasting fully 10 minutes at the end of which the referee sent off the 20 players – all except Nacional goalkeeper Sere and Penarol winger Venancio Ramos. Fans carried on the battle on the streets near the stadium and where several were injured.

As neither team were left with the minimum required seven players on the field, both lost points, but as it turned out both qualified for the final round with Liverpool, Progreso, Renistas, Wanderers, Cerro and Central Espanol making up the rest.

The 20 players had to turn up at a court of law for causing a disorder.

Nacional and Penarol met again in the final round three weeks later. Penarol won 1-0 and there were no incidents.

CHILE: Colo-Colo and Universidad Catolica, frequently lining up reserves due to Libertadores Cup engagements, were nevertheless on the way to qualifying for the final round of the pre-season tournament with one match to go in the preliminary round.

With the top six going into the final round, Universidad Catolica shared top place with Naval in the north zone, followed two points behind by Cobreloa, Huachipato and Cobresal, while Union Espanola led the south zone by two points from Colo-Colo and O'Higgins.

Bottom

The top two from each group qualify for semi-finals.

Universidad de Chile, who returned to the first division this year, but are currently bottom of their group, continue to strengthen their team. They signed Argentine international Carlos Tapia (midfielder) and Chileans Martin Galvez (who returned from Mexico's Universidad de Nuevo Leon) and defender Oscar Rojas.

COLOMBIA: After holding up the start of the championship for another week, the government relented and allowed it to commence in April. Clubs had not complied with government requests to open their books for investigation in an effort to find drug links with soccer.

Particularly outspoken against was Union Magdalena president, Eduardo Davila who appears to be under investigation for drug dealing by US authorities. He would also not agree to another government request – that all soccer officials must present good conduct certificates issued by the police.

But the government insists that all clubs will have to comply soon, otherwise they will not be able to take part in the second part of the championship.

America (Cali) won the opening championship, the first stage of the Colombian season played in an unusual format. The clubs played in three groups of five each and then the top of each section played in a three-team group as did the second, third, fourth and fifth of each section.

America also won the top teams group, but in the end overall points obtained were added up.

America had 19 points, Santa Fe 16, Nacional – who were bottom in their five-team group and then picked up most points in the three-team group – had 15 and Millonairios 14. The top four took one bonus point, 0.75, 0.50 and 0.25 respectively into the end of season final round.

Reserves

National team players did not participate in this tournament as they were preparing for the World Cup. Nacional thus fielded a virtual reserve team as most of their players are internationals.

There were no further incidents (mafia killings connected with the game) of the type which caused the suspension of the previous season's championship, but Millonarios, the last champions (1955) were fined 69,000 dollars by the government for financial irregularities in player transfers as the investigation to find drug links with clubs continued.

ECUADOR: Champions Barcelona, although at times fielding weak teams because of Libertadores Cup commitments, retained the lead for the first five matches, but then suspended a couple of games due to cup engagements are now fourth, but still unbeaten, while Nacional, the only club traditionally without foreign players, top the first division by two points.

Leaders

PARAGUAY: Cerro Porteno lost their unbeaten record in the seventh game, but led the first division by four points with one game to go in the first round thus making sure of a final round place as the top three qualify from the first two rounds and two from the third which is split in two groups. Champions Olimpia meanwhile, were near the bottom of the table – eight points from the top – while doing well in the Libertadores Cup.

In spite of occasionally fielding weak teams while engaged in the Libertadores Cup, Cerro Porteno won the first round of the Paraguayan first division by three points to qualify for the end of season final round together with Sportivo Lugueno (second) and Libertad (third).

At press time they were also joint leaders of the second round, jointly with champions Olimpia (also in the Libertadores Cup) and River Plate. Three more teams qualify from this round and two from the third round which will be played in two groups.

ROJAS OWNS UP AT LAST

AFTER nine months of steadfast denials, former Chilean international goalkeeper Roberto Rojas admitted he cut himself on the forehead with a surgical knife in last year's World Cup qualifying game against Brazil in Rio de Janeiro.

He said team captain Fernando Astengo and two other players were also involved in the pot – that they would leave the field at the first sign of trouble – but that coach Orlando Aravena knew nothing about it.

Rojas cut himself when a flare thrown from the stands landed in the penalty area in the 69th minute when Brazil were leading 1-0 on September 3.

The Chilean players carried Rojas off the field with blood steaming down his face, and refused to return, claiming it was too dangerous. FIFA later awarded the game to Brazil, banned Rojas for life and Astengo and Aravena for shorter periods.

Tested

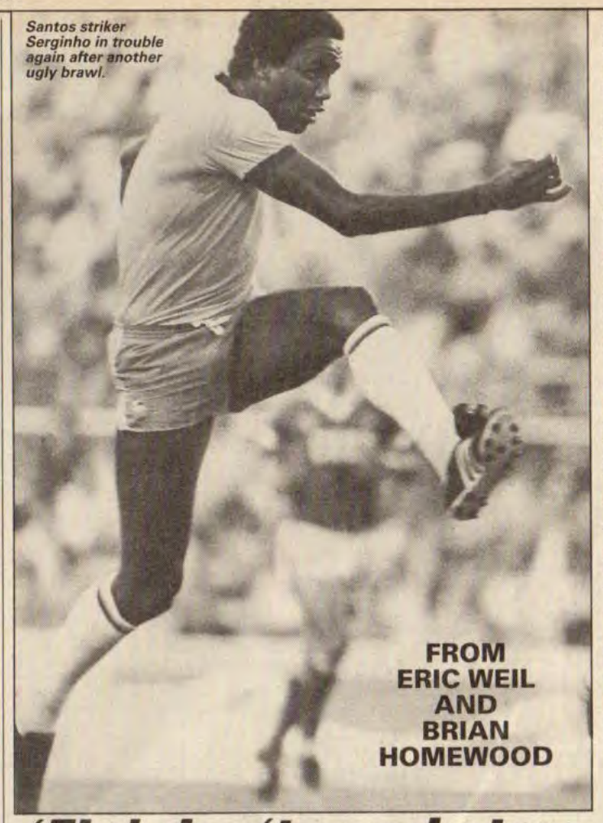
Pablo Bengoechea, the Uruguayan international who plays for Seville in Spain, and who tested positively for drugs during last year's South American Championship (Copa America) in Brazil, had his two-year suspension from taking part in tournaments under the South American Soccer Confederation lifted by that body at their meeting in Asuncion (Paraguay).

Nicolas Leoz, of Paraguay was re-elected unamiously for another four year term to preside the South American Confederation.

Miguel Ludena, the former Argentine international midfielder who was in the 1978 World Cup winning squad, wants to try his luck in US in-door soccer but his current club, Independiente, were not keen to let him go although he is not currently in the first team.

Andres Prieto, former Chilean international and one of the country's leading coaches with Universidad Catolica, moved to Cruz Azul (Mexico).

Leading Transfers: Uruguayans Jorge Sere (goal) and William Castro (half) from Nasional (Uruguay) to Cruz Azul (Mexico) ... Argentine Alber to Acosta from San Lorenzo (Argentina) to Toulouse (France) for 470,000 dollars ... Bolivian Victor Hugo Antelo from Blooming (Bolivia) to Fujita Soccer club (Japan) on a two-year loan for 80,000 dollars to become first Bolivian player to play in Japan.



Santos striker Serginho in trouble again after another ugly brawl.

FROM ERIC WEIL AND BRIAN HOMEWOOD

'Flu' don't need stars for high flying

FLUMINENSE, who are becoming known as the "little team" as they have no big name players, clinched the Rio Cup, the second stage of the Guanabara state championship to qualify for the title play-off with first stage winners Vasco da Gama and Botafogo who gained most points overall.

Fluminense won by a point in spite of losing their final game 2-0 to America and Botafogo gained the highest overall points total with a 2-0 win over Flamengo on the final day to leave them in second place.

The title playoff was postponed until after the World Cup.

In the Sao Paulo league, 12 of the 24 teams qualified for the third to be played after the World Cup – Corinthians, XV de Jau, Bragentino, Ituano, Santos, Mogi Mirim, XV Pirasicaba, Palmeiras, Ferroviaria, America, Novorizontino and Portuguesa – by taking the top six paces in the two groups. The remaining 12 play off for two further third round places.

Oft-suspended former World Cup striker Serginho, now 36 and playing for Santos, was suspended for 150 days and eight matches following a brawl which held up his club's league match against Sao Paolo for 20 minutes as officials and players of both teams were involved in a free-for-all.

Serginho, who was on the substitutes bench, ran onto the field and became involved. He was sent off, but returned to continue the fight.

In another development, almost as shocking, Jorge Salgado, who as director of football holds one of the most important positions in the CBF says that he would like to see the state championships wiped and replaced by a national league which would be won by the team with the most points.

To most normal Brazilians, the suggestion makes perfect sense. But it sparked off an enormous controversy and brought a predictable reaction of indignation from a small but powerful minority – the country's football directors.

Salgado is definitely not a typical Brazilian director as he has been at pains to point out in recent interviews. He says: "I'm like those supporters who are tired of court injunctions and alterations of rules and fixture lists."

Euro like

His basic proposal is that the Brazilian championship should occupy the best part of the football calender, as opposed to the four months it takes up at the moment. He also wants to dispense with the current format and run it, instead, on the same basis as most European leagues with the teams playing each other home and away and the championship being won by the team with the most points.

He says: "Our directors need to bring themselves up todate and realise that ours is the only championship in the world where the team that gets the most points is not necessarily the champion."

He believes that the ideal size would be between 16 and 20 teams with four being relegated to the second division, which itself would be disputed on the same simple basis. Meanwhile, the third division would be regionalised in the early stages with the winners of each region meeting to decide promotion.

All this would spell doom for the state champions and it is because of this that the directors of the state federations are so vehemently opposed. Eduardo Jose Farah, president of the powerful Sao Paulo federation, claims that Salgado's plans would, among other things, cause "unemployment."

Euclides de Freitas Filho, president of the Para federation, says that Salgado's comments reveal "a lack of knowledge of Brazilian football and are a lack of respect to the Brazilian supporters and clubs." Wilson da Silva Pereira, president of the Goias federation says Salgado's plans are "inviable."

One thing that is certainly inviable is the competition which Farah's federation "organised" this year. With 24 teams and a format so complicated that it was simply ridiculous. The championship attracted an average of 3,728 people to each match – which, as the Folha da Sao Paulo newspaper pointed out, was roughly the same as Wimbledon's smallest gate of the season.

As far as Salgado is concerned, the Paulista championship is an illustration of all that is wrong with the current set-up.

"The president of the Sao Paulo federation is very interested in looking at the football of Sao Paulo, forgetting the rest," he says. "Maybe he does not know that in doing this he is causing problems for Brazilian football and, as a consequence, the football of Sao Paulo itself. The Paulista championship is truly absurd. The champion, for example, could have 25 points and the runners-up, 70."

Low gates

Even in other states, where the format is relatively simple, average attendances are alarmingly low. In Rio de Janeiro, Vasco, the Brazilian champions who boast six full internationals in their side, played Nova Cidade in front of 456 people. The average attendance for the Rio championship at the time of writing was 6,027 but this was distorted by the 107,547 attendance for the Vasco-Flamengo derby (a good illustration of what could be achieved in Brazil).

In Minas Gerais, the average was 2,415, while it was 3,026 in Parana and 2,257 in Rio Grande do Sul. For comparison, the average attendance in last year's Copa Uniao was 10,857.

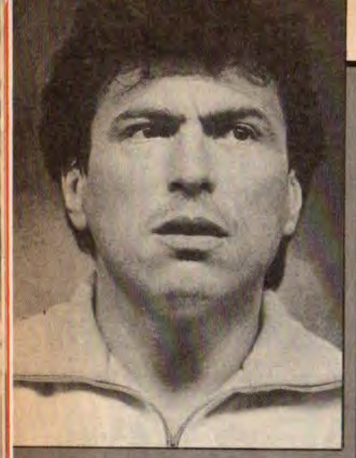
These figures support Salgado, as does the favour a national league finds amongst the majority of players and managers. Salgado however, realises that his proposals will not be easy to push through. The main problem is that the CBF president is elected by none other than the presidents of the state federations, the very people who are most hostile to Salgado's idea.

It is not clear whether Salgado has the backing of Ricardo Teixeira. The CBF president Teixeira has so far not commented on Salgado's ideas but since he took over in January of last year, it has been clear that Teixeira's main aim as president is to stay president. This means he will have to be re-elected in 1992 which, in turn, means he cannot afford to offend the state federations.

According to Farah, Teixeira intends to strengthen the state championships. And it was Teixeira who recently overturned a 90-day ban imposed on Farah by the CBF's disciplinary tribunal after Farah had alledgedly not enforced a decision made by the same tribunal.

The controversy has held a fairly low profile because of the country's obsession with the World Cup.

But the Brazilian championship is due to start in early August, at the same time the final stages of the Paulista championship will be in progress. Just to add to the confusion the Copa Brazil will also start.



Passarella in line to rebuild Argentina

BY ERIC WEIL

ARGENTINA may have been villains of the World Cup piece elsewhere, but the deposed Cup-holders returned to a heroes' welcome in Buenos Aires.

Their 1-0 defeat by West Germany in Rome was seen almost as a triumph in the face of what local experts considered a massive plot involving FIFA and Italian organising officials – including FIFA president Joao Havelange himself, no less.

They were accused – among other things – of being behind the decisions which brought about the debilitating suspensions of Claudio Caniggia, Ricardo Giusti and Julio Olarticoechea as well as the controversial appointment of Edgardo Codesal Mendez to referee the Final.

Codesal was born in Uruguay, anything but friendly neighbours to Argentina, and took immense criticism for sending off two Argentines in the Final as well as awarding the controversial yet decisive penalty when Roberto Sensini was adjudged to have brought down Rudi Voller.

Argentine skipper Diego Maradona says he was so disgusted at the "lack of consideration given to players at the World Cup" that he will not take part in the competition again.

Also stepping aside is manager Carlos Bilardo. He had announced his impending departure before the finals. Favourite as successor is Argentina's 1978 World Cup-winning skipper Daniel Passarella.

He did his chances no harm when River Plate, whom Passarella has been coaching for the past year, won the Argentine national title for the 18th time. That's two more titles than old rivals Boca Juniors. In fact, Passarella's men had the title sewn up two weeks before the end of the campaign and ended up seven points clear of second-placed Independiente, the outgoing champions.

River were easily the steadiest team with a defence which gave little away – only 20 goals in 38 matches (in which 48 were scored) – and a solid midfield and counter-attack in which Uruguayan Ruben Da Silva and Ramon Medina Bello (the leading scorer with nine) stood out.

Independiente, leading at the halfway stage, slumped for several weeks in the second half of the season which makes up for the final difference. Both are good teams and have been representing Argentina in this year's Libertadores Cup (for which they qualified last year).

River Plate fans will tell you that River Plate have 21 titles since the start of professional soccer in 1931, but three of these were national titles won at time when both a first division and national championship was played in the same season and the first division winner counted as the season's champion.

Nevertheless, River fully deserved this latest honour. They show the potential in most seasons, but it was shown once again that the club does best when it is coached by former players.

They had not won the title for four years and at the start of the current season recently retired international midfielder Norberto Alonso, always a great idol with River Plate fans, was appointed.

He did not have an FA coaching certificate so a former team-mate, Reinaldo Merlo was officially put in charge. The duo resigned at the end of 1989 (at the halfway stage) when the club's committee changed.

The new committee engaged the club's former defender and captain, Passarella. He also had no coaching certificate and, ironically, he finished his course the week after he took River Plate to the title. Steady River Plate had a 10-5-4 record in the first round and it was almost the same (10-8-1) in the second.

Also ironically, River Plate, a big all-sports club, are in serious financial difficulties and they have put all their players on offer. At press time it seemed likely that several were about to move which would endanger the Libertadores Cup chances of what looks like one of the strongest teams in South America.

The revelation of the tournament was the young Rosario Central team who finished in third place, but were demoted down to fourth (on goals behind erratic Boca Juniors) by the disciplinary panel.

On the final day of the season the Rosario derby between Central and Newell's Old Boys – in which there was nothing much at stake – was suspended before the end due to serious crowd trouble which including fighting between the two sets of fans and a hail of stones being thrown on the field (which also knocked out Central goalkeeper Lanar). One fan was killed by a policeman's rubber bullet – the 104th fan to die as a result of fighting at local stadiums since 1958.

The disciplinary committee declared both clubs losers of the match – which Central had been winning 1-0 – and also took two more points off each of the clubs. Also suspended was Newell's Old Boys championship top scorer Ariel Cozzoni who was sent off in that game – for six matches which he may never comply with as he is most likely on his way to club abroad before the next season starts in August.

Cozzoni finished with 23 goals, followed by Acosta (San Lorenzo) – since transferred to Toulouse (France) -Bevilaqua (Talleres Cordoba) and Pizzi (Rosario Central) 15.

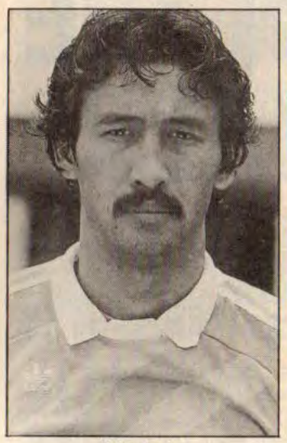
The 59 title winners since the first professional championship in 1931 are: 18 – River Plate; 12 – Boca Juniors; 9 – Independiente; 6 – Racing (Avellaneda); 5 – San Lorenzo; 2 – Estudiantes de La Plata, Newell's Old Boys; 1 – Chacarita Juniors, Huracan, Quilmes, Argentinos Juniors, Rosario Central.

The 1990 World Cup Final was Maradona's last game in the competition.

Another World Cup Final controversy ... Dezotto gets the yellow card after a foul on Littbarski.

River Plate are the current Argentina Champions. (Left to right) Standing: Fabian Basualdo, Leonardo Astrada, Ernesto Corti, Jorge Higuain, Carlos Enrique, Jose Miguel. Kneeling: Ramon Medina, Bello, Juan Jose Borelli, Ruben Da Silva, Hector Enrique, Gustavo Zapata.

PUEBLA SWEEP THE BOARD



Pablo Larios.

WHAT a pity that Mexico were absent – for 'extra-competitive' reasons – from the World Cup.

The 1989-90 season was so competitive and of such high-calibre soccer that we have to look back at least two decades to find a better tournament.

Puebla took all honours, winning first the cup (Copa Mexico) and then the league. As a consequence, without playing they won the challenge cup (Campeon de Campeones) usually awarded to the winner of a 'Supercup' match between cup and league winners. The last time the same team won all three honours was back in 1969 when Cruz Azul were champions.

All attendance records were broken in the past season: an average of 21,615 spectators per game attended a crowded, complicated 380-game schedule played in 15 different stadia.

Atlante, as expected, were relegated in the last round of the tournament when Tampico-Madero won their match thus maintaining a three-point lead. This is the second time Atlante a popular Mexico City team, founded in 1916, have slipped into the Second Division.

BY CARLOS RAMIREZ

The Mexican first division is played with 20 teams from 12 different cities divided into four groups of five teams each. The first two of each group qualified for the play-offs. In the first eliminatory round played home and away, America eliminated Toluca; the surprise team of Correcaminos of UAT ("Roadrunners", a university team from the northern part of Mexico that won promotion to first division only three seasons ago, were eliminated by Puebla; Pumas UNAM eliminated Necexa and Universidad de Guadalajara ran over Tigres of UNL.

The semi-finals provided even greater thrills. Puebla, playing at home let slip a 4-1 lead to Pumas, when the battling Mexico City university team tied the match 4-4, in the last minute. However, Puebla recovered their goal machine for the return match at the University Stadium in the capital, and won 4-2 to go on to the final.

Certainly the other semi-final was a big surprise: Universidad de Guadalajara, a modest team of students and young players coached by Alberto Guerra, beat America 2-0 at the Jalisco Stadium and even though they lost the return at the Azteca in front of a capacity crowd, the goal they scored away was the difference.

Then came the final. Ever since Puebla won away 2-1 the situation was clear. The return match at Puebla saw an intense, hard-fought match, with the U. de G. players fighting till the end, and losing 4-3.

Puebla and their "Chilean Connection" (Edgardo Fuentes, Jorge Aravena and Carlos Poblete), with help from the Brazilian Edivaldo and the Mexican players Larios, Ruiz Esparza, De la Torre, Bernal and Hernandez, were the best team of the season.

LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP (top two in each group qualify for final stages).
Group one: Pumas UNAM 46pts, Puebla 46, Monterrey 42, Morelia 39, Irapuato 37, Group two: Universidad de Guadalajhara 40, Toluca 38, Santos Laguna 34, Cruz Azul 33, Atlante 28. Group three: America 48, Correcaminos UAT 40, Atlas 37, Tecos UAG 34, Tampico-Madero 29, Group four: Tigres UNL 40, Necaxa 39, Guadalajara 38, Cobras 38, Veracruz 34. Relegated: Atlante. Promoted: Leon.
Top Scorers: Jorge Comas (Veracruz)26, Jorge Gabrich (Irapuato) 22; Edudos Santos (America) 21; Amarilla (America) 20; Jorge Poblete (Puebla) 16; Sergio Almiron (Tigres UNL) 16; Luis Flores (Cruz Azul) 16.
PLAY-OFF FINAL
First leg: May 23 – Jalisco/Guadalajara
Universidad de Guadalajara 1 (Octavio Mora)
Pubela 2 (Jorge Aravena, J C Poblete)
Att: 66,000. **Ref:** M A Miranda.
Second leg: May 26 – Cuauhtemoc/Puebla
Puebla 4 (J Hernandez, Jorge Aravena 2, C Poblete)
Universidad de Guadalajara 3 (R Esparza og, D Guzman, J Davalos)
Att: 52,500. **Ref:** B Nunez.

Puebla: Pablo Larios – Alvarez, E Fuentes, Ruiz Esparza, Orozco – Torres, Bernal, Poblete – J Hernandez, Aravena, Edivaldo.

U de G: Aguado – Higareda, Rodriguez, Vazquez, Diaz – Davalos, Romero, Reyes – Mora, Guzman, Perez.

Mexico 1989-90 national team matches
1989
Feb 14: 3-1 v Poland (Puebla)
Feb 21: 2-1 v Guatemala (Log Angeles)
Feb 23: 2-0 v El Salvador (Log Angeles)
Aug 8: 4-2 v South Korea (Los Angeles)
Aug 13: 3-2 v Juventus (Los Angeles)
Nov 28: 2-0 v Ararat Yerevan (Los Angeles)
1990
Jan 30: 2-0 v Argentina (Los Angeles)
Mar 20: 2-1 v Uruguay (Los Angeles)
Apr 17: 2-0 v Colombia (Los Angeles)
May 10: 1-0 v United States (Vancouver)
May 13: 1-2 v Canada (Vancouver)
Jun 2: 0-2 v Belgium (Brussels)
Managers: Feb 1989 Alberto Guerra; Aug-Nov 1989 Mario Velarde;
Jan-May 1990 Manuel Lapuente and Ignacio Trelles; June 1990 Manuel Lapuente.

EL SALVADOR: Alianza beat last year's champions, Luis Angel Firpo 3-1 to take the title from them. Alianza had won this season's first (qualifying) stage but in the four-team final round the two teams drew 1-1 on the last day for Firpo to win by a point. This meant a playoff and Alianza won the championship for the fourth time.

COSTA RICA: The championship was suspended with one game to go to concentrate on World Cup preparations as clubs refused to release their players otherwise. But four teams had already qualified for the five-team final round – leaders Saprissa. Alajuelense, Uruguay and Herediano (the latter on goals) while Cartagines (who needed a draw) and Limon remained in contention for the fifth place.

HOLLAND BY SIMON KUPER

FEYENOORD ARE ON THE WAY BACK

FEYENOORD, for once, seem to have bought the right players. They finished eleventh last season, but the club should surely now regain their traditional place in the first three.

In the last decade, innumerable signings have failed in Rotterdam. But the Dutch international Henk Fraser, Ed de Goey, Harry van der Laan and particularly the Romanian midfielder Ioan Sabau, formerly of Dynamo Bucharest, appear inspired choices. For once, Feyenoord have managed to sign players good enough for Ajax and PSV.

Fraser, 24, from Roda Kerkrade, is one of the hottest propertie in Holland. He started his career a mediocre striker, but soon metamorphosed into a quick, intelligent, skilful central defender a la Des Walker. Fraser was a member of Holland's World Cup squad. Roda are losing their other star, striker John van Loen, to Anderlecht.

Sabau, 22, was one of the best Romanians at the World Cup. A law student and defensive midfielder, he is one of the many Romanian footballers to go West after Ceascescu's fall.

De Goey, 23, has excelled for years in Sparta Rotterdam's goal. Although Sparta play just across the Rhine from Feyenoord, it always seemed certain that in time De Goey would make the trek to Eindhoven, to replace Hans van Breukelen when the international grew old.

This season, however, PSV signed Fortuna Sittard's Ruud Hesp as Van Breukelen's successor. Hesp, generally regarded as the best young keeper in Holland, will remain in Sittard for one more season, Van Breukelen's last at PSV.

Joop Hiele, Feyenoord's goalkeeper for over a decade, will move on to SVV Schiedam, who this season gained promotion to become the third Rotterdam side in the premier division. Hiele is only 31 and a member of the Dutch World Cup squad, so Feyenoord seem to be discarding him somewhat prematurely. The reasons seem to be personal: Ger Lagendijk, Feyenoord's new general manager, has taken a dislike to Hiele. SVV are delighted.

Haarlem's Edward Metgod will replace De Goey at Sparta. The younger brother of Johnny Metgod has had a very unlucky career. Now 30, he appeared on the Dutch scene a decade ago, impressed everyone, and was soon picked for Holland. However, he never left Haarlem and every year he saw the club decline further. In an unfashionable team he became unfashionable, the big clubs and the national side lost interest, and now he is leaving relegated Haarlem for another lowly team.

Joop Hiele.

Sparta's troubles lie off the field as well as on it. Their sponsors have revolted against the board of directors and are threatening to desert the club when their contracts run out. This would probably drive Sparta, Holland's oldest professional club, into bankruptcy.

The sponsors accuse the directors of taking too few financial risks: Sparta's policy has always been to stay out of debt, which means that every year they sell their best players and buy no new ones.

De Goey's departure is a case in point. Prince Polley, a Ghanian striker who became the fan's favourite, is leaving for Beerschot of Belgium. A sponsor offered to pay to keep Polley at Sparta, but the club's chairman, the old fashioned Floor Bouwer, refused. According to the sponsors, Sparta have become Rotterdam's third club, after Feyenoord and SVV.

Peculiar

Heerenveen gained promotion together with SVV. The club from the northern province of Friesland qualified through the peculiar, complicated Dutch play-off system.

Until this season, the only two Dutch teams never to play in the premier division were the clubs from Friesland, Cambuur and Heerenveen. The province is exceptionally cold, has its own language, and is often fiercely anti-Dutch. The fans are fanatical: Heerenveen should fill their stadium (with its 12,000 capacity) for almost every match.

However, the club seems unlikely to survive in the premier division, despite signing Go Ahead Deventer's two stars, Harry Decheiver and Arno Hofstede. Heerenveen's playmaker, Pieter Bijl, has left for Utrecht, who have also signed Fortuna Sittard's excellent defender, Marcel Liesdek.

Meanwhile the Dutch footballing community was initially amazed by PSV's signing of Bobby Robson as new coach. Soren Lerby, who finished his career at PSV last month, was speaking for many when he asked "Surely PSV aren't going to play English football?"

Vim Kieft has left PSV to join Bordeaux.

PSV lost the Dutch championship last season because their main players quarrelled incessantly with one other. Lerby and Wim Kieft are leaving the club, but wounds remain open. PSV needed a respected authoritative manager, preferably a foreigner who is able to stand outside the club's schisms and felt that Robson was their man.

That is they approached him only after Sven-Goran Erikssen of Benfica turned them down. Robson's reputation in Holland, such as it is, is based on his successes with Ipswich in the late 1970s, when Muhren and Frans Thijssen played for him.

When England played Holland, the two dug-outs provided almost as gripping a spectacle as the field. For on the Dutch bench sat Leo Beenhakker, manager of the reigning champions Ajax, while Robson, future manager of Ajax's only rivals, marshalled his men from a few yards away. Robson must have watched PSV's internationals with mixed feelings.

Completed

By the time Robson arrived to start work, PSV had already completed most of their transfer dealing.

Last season, the club had three international strikers vying for two places, and the result was tension. Wim Kieft of Holland has gone to Bordeaux, and Denmark's Flemming Povlsen to Borussia Dortmund, while their only replacement is KV Mechelen's Johnny Bosman, who will form a striking partnership with Brazil's Romario.

Nevertheless, they seem to have done good business. It was essential for PSV to sell Kieft, though Povlsen is an entirely different case. He joined PSV from FC Koln less than a year ago for £1.4 million, and great things were expected of him. He scored two goals in his first match for PSV, but spent most of his time on the bench, behind Kieft and Romario. Midway through the season manager Guus Hiddink dropped Kieft in favour of Povlsen but the Dutch striker's protests were so vehement and public that Hiddink reinstated Kieft after just two matches.

Popular

When PSV signed Bosman, Povlsen saw another year on the bench in prospect, and left. Despite his season as a reserve, Povlsen brought PSV the same sum that they paid for him last August. Bosman, who surprisingly was left out of the Dutch squad for the World Cup, is an excellent buy for PSV, and as a homecoming Dutch international he should prove popular with the fans. Erwin Koeman is also joining PSV from Mechelen. PSV are still looking for a sweeper to replace Ivan Nielsen, who has gone home to Denmark.

Fortuna Sittard has also been selling strikers. The club, to its sorrow, has lost its English duo, Mark Farrington and John Clayton. Farrington has joined Hertha Berlin, largely thanks to his seven goals in the last three league matches of the season. Clayton, who played for Plymouth left Fortuna claiming that his wife was homesick, a few weeks later he turned up at Volendam, in north-western Holland!

A greater blow for Fortuna is the loss of centre-back Marcel Liesdek to FC Utrecht. For the last few seasons Liesdek had been Fortuna's most important player, and had he played for a more fashionable club he would have undoubtedly reached the national side. He is going to Utrecht because he wants to return to western Holland: Sittard is in the south-east.

Utrecht have also signed Pieter Bijl, from Heerenveen. Bijl, now 25, has been Heerenveen's playmaker since he was a teenager, but he never reached the astronomical heights of which he was thought capable. Utrecht have lost Marco Boogers to RKC Waalwijk. RKC's Adri Bogers, a right-back, has signed for KV Mechelen.

Dutch football is still mourning the World Cup, such a disaster for Holland. Only two Dutchmen profited from the tournament: two students named Peter Vogel and Ronald Moray. The two are conjurers in their spare time, and this summer performed a trick which had the whole nation gaping in wonder for a month. Before the World Cup they wrote down their predictions for all matches in Group F, the group containing Holland England. When their predictions were read out on national TV, after the group matches were over, the two were found to have been right every time.

Amazing!

Then, on June 22, they predicted the result of the World Cup final. They locked the piece of paper in a metal box which they gave to an official notary. They insisted that he unlock the box after the final, claiming that if their prediction became known beforehand it would affect the result. Minutes after West Germany had beaten Argentina 1-0, the notary opening the box on TV. Again the prediction was correct. The Dutch are too sceptical to believe in magic, but nobody can explain the successful predictions.

Vogel and Moray claim that it is no conjuring trick but refuse to reveal their secret. Whatever the secret is, it is highly lucrative: an American TV station has invited them to forecast the result of the Superbowl.

REP. OF IRELAND BY SEAN CREEDON

O'Neill blow for FAI

The Football Association of Ireland, who three years ago were making a loss, have really turned the corner.

During the last financial year the FAI recorded a profit of over £1 million. And the new found success is all due to Jack Charlton and his boys in green. This figure does not include receipts from the World Cup which are not expected from FIFA until October. Big Jack and his assistant Maurice Setters cost the FAI only £73,000 in wages and expenses during 1989-90.

The bad news to merge from this year's FAI annual meeting was Tony O'Neill's surprise decision to retire after just two years as general secretary. 'The Doc' as he is affectionately known intends to go back to work full time in his sports injury clinic in Dublin. He will continue his work with University College Dublin and the League of Ireland, where he doubles as Press Officer.

Before his shock decision to quit Dr O'Neill advised his fellow FAI council members to agree bonus schemes with the players before the start of the European Championship or World Cup campaigns. Before leaving for Italy the Irish players were involved in a row over bonus payments.

It wasn't really the players fault as Jack Charlton had advised them not to negotiate any deal until they had qualified for the World Cup.

The domestic season starts on Sunday August 19 with the League Cup. The Premier division of the League Championship begins on September 2 with the First Division start put back to October 7th. During September the first division clubs will play each other in a Shield competition. This means that the 33 match Premier Division and 27 match first division will both finish on the same day, April 21, 1991.

Paul McGee, who was sacked by Galway United after just one season in charge, has now linked up with Derry City as a player. Derry will be the former Eire striker's 14th club having played in both Irish Leagues, Wales, England, Canada and Holland. Former Dundalk captain Joey Malone takes over the hot seat at Galway and his first signing was former Dundalk clubmate Larry Wyse.

Shelbourne, who look most likely to challenge St Patrick's Athletic for the Premier Division title will play six English clubs this month. Visitors to the refurbished Tolka Park will be Tottenham, Leeds United, Manchester City, West Brom, Millwall and Huddersfield. Shelbourne have come up with a very attractive offer for fans who wish to see all six games. A combined terrace ticket will cost only £12 with a stand ticket for all six games costing only £20.

Meanwhile Bohemians, still celebrating their Centenary year will play Manchester United, Celtic and Aston Villa.

St James' Gate are back in the League of Ireland after a 48 year absence. The team of Guinness Brewery have taken the place of Newcastle West in the first division. The County Limerick club have taken a sabbatical for a few seasons to carry out improvements to their ground.

The Gate were founder members of the League of Ireland in 1921 and won the inaugural League and Cup competitions in the 1921-22 season. They have excellent facilities at Iveagh Grounds in Crumlin, just a mile away from St Patrick's Athletic, the recently crowned Premier Division Champions. One wonders what support St James' Gate, the seventh Dublin club in the League, will get.

The League of Ireland will be sponsored by Bord Gais next season. The Irish Gas Board, who sponsored RTE's television coverage of the World Cup have replaced Opel, who will continue their involvement with the Republic's senior team.

A busy close season in the managerial merry go round in Ireland. Eamonn Gregg, who made an excellent start to his managerial career with Kilkenny City last season has now been appointed manager of Bohemians, one of his former clubs as a player. Republic of Ireland under-16 manager Joe McGrath takes over at Kilkenny. Former pin up boy of the League of Ireland Mick Leech is the new Athlone Town manager and Ron Langford is promoted to the hot seat at nearby Longford Town.

SWITZERLAND BY ARTHUR ROTMIL

Grasshoppers still the favourites

THE Swiss league championship, due to have started on July 25, will continue with 22 matches until December 16 brings the end of the first phase.

Only the top eight clubs will contest the so-called championship play-off beginning on March 3 so it is not possible to produce a fixture programme for the second half of the season before mid-December. The four bottom clubs will be playing-off in the relegation pool.

Favourites for the title are Grasshoppers who completed a fine double, having also defeated Xamax Neuchatel in the Cup final by 2-1. The Zurich outfit thus won their 21st league crown and 17th cup, both national records. It was a triumph too for their German team chief Ottmar Mitzfeld, 41, but he could have problems since several established players are leaving the club.

Replacements

The Hoppers hope to get adequate replacements and general manager Erick Vogel, 51, has been on the lookout for new stars at home and abroad.

Lausanne Sports, who were surprising runners up, and finished behind only because of inferior placing in the preliminary stage, could again be favoured – one defeat in the 14 play-off games produced the best record among the title contenders.

Jackie Charlton.

Manager Umberto Barberis, the former international, is particularly pleased with the application and form of his Bulgarian star striker Bojidar Iskrenov 27.

Third placed Xamax are hoping for better things this term as they will be led by the Englishman Roy Hodgson 43, who has made his reputation in Sweden.

Dethroned champions Lucerne are hoping for great things from their Yugoslav Semir Tuce, while St. Gallen are still wondering whether their Chilean star Ivan Zamorano, the league's top scorer with 23 goals, will stay on.

GREECE BY LOUIS ECONOMOPOULOS

Big two fight it out in court

BEFORE the start of the new Greek season arch rivals Panathinaikos and Olympiakos were battling it out – not on the pitch but in courts.

The burning issue involved former Olymiakos midfielder Stratos Apostolakis who signed to play with Panathinaikos at the end of 1989-1990 season as he was a free agent. But Olympiakos claimed he signed for Panathinaikos while he was still playing for them, well before he became a free agent.

Apostolakis and Panathinaikos deny the charges and it will be up to the judge to come through with the answer.

'I waited until June 15 for Olympiakos to make an offer. They didn't. Thus I was free to choose whatever team I wished,' Apostolakis says.

Two former teammates of Apostolakis at Olympiakos testified against Apostolakis before the judge. Nikos Anastopoulos and Tassos Mitropoulos, also teammates of Apostolakis on the national team, said he signed before June 15.

Some 3,500 Olympiakos fans marched outside Parliament in Athens to protest against Panathinaikos for taking away 'illegally' Apostolakis and for general ill-treatment of Olympiakos by sports authorities.

Panathinaikos president George Vardinoyiannis, besides adding Apostolakis, has also picked up Romanian star Danut Lupu from Dinamo Bucharest this season to add to his other players who last season won the Greek championship. He said the aim this season is to excel in European as well as winning the championship once again.

Pana's championship-winning star was Poland's Krzystof Warzycha, who scored 14 goals under the managerial guidance of Bulgaria Hristo Bonev.

Olympiakos have sold Hungarian star Lajos Detari to Italy's Bologna and are using the £3 million fee to try to sign Soviet stars Oleg Protasov, Igor Dobrovolski and Yuri Savichev. New coach is ex-Soviet star Oleg Blokhin.

One other World Cup hero to make it to Greece is Egyptian star scorer Hossam Hassan who signed a three-year contract with PAOK of Salonica. He joins Egyptian teammate Tolba Maghdy. More than 3,000 PAOK fans greeted Hassan at the Salonica Airport.

A Bill aimed at bringing Greek soccer legislation in line with FIFA regulations has been rushed through Parliament after Greek teams were threatened with exclusion from international competition by FIFA.

Egypt World Cup star Hossam Hassam has joined PAOK.

The Bill transfers responsibility for the staging of the First Division from the Greek Soccer Federation to the Union of Professional Clubs which was responsible for organising the championship before 1986.

BERLIN BY PENTTI HIETANEN

Putting Berlin back on the map

The Olympic Stadium could see a revival and become Germany's "Wembley".

WHEN listing the soccer capitals of the world, Berlin is not an obvious choice.

Strangely, for a city of over 3 million people, Berlin has never set the world alight in football. In fact, this former focal point of Europe's politics and culture has seen pitifully little of soccer success.

Dynamo East Berlin used to rule the roost in the east not so long ago. But, outside of the GDR, few experts took their hoarding of the silverware seriously. Today one feels that even for the club, recently re-named FC Berlin, the glorious past is more a source of embarrassment.

In the west things have been even worse with Hertha, Blau-Weiss and Tennis Borussia struggling to find their feet in the Bundesliga, never mind challenging for the honours.

But, surely, the traditions of Berlin demand better things in the future. Since the crushing of that nightmarish Wall, closer co-operation between clubs is expected and the western clubs will understandably gain from the freeing of player moves. Who knows, perhaps even the Berlin Olympic stadium will see a revival as the 'German Wembley'?

Traditionally, Hertha are the best-known Berlin club, although not the oldest. That distinction belongs to Viktoria Berlin, which was founded in 1889. Even Hertha's current rivals Blau-Weiss, founded in 1890, are two years older than the popular club from Neukolln's working-class area.

The first-ever German champions to come from Berlin were Union 92, in 1905, while Viktoria took the honours in 1908 and 1911.

Hertha, however, had to wait until 1930 and 1931 for their only two championships to date. They are still remembered with great fondness by the Berliners. The star of the side was wing-half Hans Sobeck, later a highly-successful coach in Berlin. Sobeck won 10 caps for Germany and, even more significantly, played over 100 matches for Berlin's selection sides.

Hertha were founder members of the Bundesliga in 1963, only to be forced to abandon their place two years later because of pay regulation infringements.

Pressure

Hertha's relegations led to perhaps the strangest episode in the history of the Bundesliga. After the building-up of the Berlin Wall in 1961 and increasing eastern pressure on West-Berlin, the western authorities wanted the city to have a higher profile in football, too. So, in 1965, brave little Tasmania 1900 Berlin were granted a place in the Bundesliga regardless of the fact that their sporting achievements didn't merit it.

Tasmania began by signing Horst Szymaniak, a former West German World Cup midfielder, from Italy's Varese, and their first Bundesliga match against Karlsruhe attracted 80,000 spectators to the Olympic stadium. Tasmania won 2-0 and for a moment they were the name on everyone's lips.

Alas, the fairytale had a sad ending. Tasmania mustered only eight points all season, scored 15 goals – and conceded 108 in 34 matches! Their last Bundesliga match against fellow-newcomers to the league, Borussia Monchengladbach, was watched by only 827 fans.

After being relegated, Tasmania never recovered and went out of business in 1973.

Hertha were back among the big boys in 1968. To show how hot they were, they lured away two star players, Karl-Heinz Ferschl and Franz Brungs, from FC Nurnberg – to the effect that FCN, the champions in 1967-68, were relegated during the following year.

In spite of spending heavily on new players, the Bundesliga crown kept eluding Hertha. They finished third twice – in 1970 and 1971 – but did not have enough muscle to break the stranglehold established on the league title by Bayern Munich and Borussia Monchengladbach.

Star players such as Norbert Nigbur, the current Werder Bremen boss Otto Rehhagel, Erich Beer, Uwe Kliemann and Wolfgang Sidka earned Hertha a place in Europe almost yearly, but another blow was the club's involvement in the great match-fixing scandal of the Bundesliga, in 1971. Hertha survived and, in 1978, they were once again third in the table.

Carefree economics were largely to blame for Hertha's relegation in 1980. They returned for another try in 1982, but then it was already too late. Unable to find a way out of their vicious circle of debts, Hertha even reverted to amateur status. They are now playing in the second division.

Tennis Borussia, inspired by the goals of Swedish World Cup striker Benny Wendt, played one season in the Bundesliga in 1976-77.

Spirited

Blau-Weiss did exactly the same ten years later. BW made a spirited fight of it, aided by the Turkish forward Selcuk and the Belgian veteran Rene Vandereycken, but just didn't have enough strength-in-depth. They did, however, introduce World Cup striker Karl-Heinz Riedle to top-class football.

But just as Riedle had to move to Bremen to collect full international honours, several other young Berliners have taken their talents to more established West German clubs in recent years. Pierre Littbarski and Thomas Hassler are just two Berlin-born stars to have been lost to the local clubs.

It doesn't help that the three major clubs maintain little or no co-operation at all. They are like three generals each trying to win the war on their own without realising that perhaps a little bit of mutual co-operation could bring in success and more spectators. Make no mistake: a successful club from Berlin would be the biggest draw in West German football.

After the collapse of the Wall, some people were surprised by the number of Hertha supporters who live in the east. But East Berliners have not really had a club to identify with. Dynamo Berlin, with all their trophies, were always too controversial. How could an ordinary fan take to his heart a club with such close links to the feared 'Stasi', the state security police?

And Union Berlin, the only genuinely popular East Berlin club, have clearly suffered from the supremacy of Dynamo, not to mention all the string-pulling and murky manoeuvres orchestrated to maintain that supremacy. Union, at the moment, languish in the second division.

FC Berlin, ex-Dynamo, are unlikely to flourish in the future. Their image continues to be blurred by the memories of yesterday and they do not look like attracting starlets in the same excess as in the past.

The financial power of the west will, of course, tell. For example, Andreas Thom had a contract with Dynamo Berlin until 1991, but the offer of four million D-Marks by Bayer Leverkusen was too sweet to resist.

The clubs from West Berlin have already done their share of player drafting in the east. Hertha Berlin have hired three stars from the GDR, Blau-Weiss two.

It may be early days yet, but suddenly it seems that there is new optimism in a divided city, which has yearned for success already too long.

West Germany star Karl-Heinz Riedle began his top-class career in Berlin with Blau-Weiss.

EAST GERMANY

GEYER UPSET BY TERMS FOR EAST GERMAN 'SURRENDER'

EAST GERMAN soccer will disappear as an international entity perhaps even before the end of this year.

The East German federation is to be swallowed up next summer into the original/West German DFB, the East German national team will withdraw from the forthcoming European championship qualifiers and the Olympic Games, and the top two teams in this coming season's last GDR championship will enter the all-German Bundesliga next year.

Many East German club officials believe this is the only way to keep a reasonable number of their best players. It was thought the original proposals, for unification in 1992, would have provoked a wholesale departure of East German players for the West.

The West German first division will expand next year from 18 to 20 teams with the addition of the East German champions and runners-up. Six other East German teams will join the second division.

But not everyone in East Germany is pleased with the outcome of the latest negotiations. Chief critic is Eduart Geyer, coach to the national team and formerly boss of champions Dynamo Dresden.

He said: "I am disappointed with the terms. We have come out very badly. I still see the danger that our players will be bought up by strong western clubs and we in the East will be a supplier of fresh talent for the clubs in the West. There are six clubs in our top division who will be squeezed out of professional football."

Will there be a job for Geyer?

Not surprisingly, West German federation president Hermann Neuberger said the merger terms were "an excellent achievement, with which both sides can live comfortably."

Geyer's own future is uncertain – unlike that of Hans-Juergen Doerner, coach of the East German Olympic team. Doerner has already accepted a job on the West German national team coaching staff.

With the East German national team withdrawing from competition, there will be no point in arranging friendly matches. So the forthcoming European Cups will provide the last sight of East German footballers competing internationally on behalf of their vanishing state.

TURKEY

Milne the record-breaker

GORDON MILNE is a hero in Turkey after guiding Besiktas to the league and cup double and settling some sort of a record by holding on to his managerial position for three years and the promise of more to come.

Besiktas finished the championship five points ahead of Fenerbahce after monopolising the league from start of finish. Their best victory was an all-time record 10-0 thrashing of Adana Demirspor and it was no surprise that Besiktas, with 77 goals, were the league's top scorers – including no fewer than 10 penalties converted by Feyyaz.

Fenerbahce did, at least, have something to celebrate. In the President's Cup they beat Besiktas 3-2 with goals from Aykut, Hakan

BY HASAN CEMALI

and Senol. Metin scored both goals for Besiktas.

Goal scoring has been up in Turkey lately with the 306 first division matches producing 820 goals at an average of 2.67 per game but there were more yellow cards than goals! Referees cautioned players on 928 occasions and there were 56 expulsions. Yugoslav Sabotic was the top-scoring import with 19 goals.

Malatya, Altay, Samsun, Adana Demirspor and Sakarya were relegated but only three teams come up – Bakirkoy of Istanbul, Aydin and Gaziantep – since the first division this coming season will consist of only 16 clubs.

New arrivals

On the transfer front Galatasaray's experienced international left back Semih has joined Fenerbahce who also have a new coach in Dutchman Guus Hiddink from PSV Eindhoven. Other new arrivals – Hiddink demanded a strong of new defenders to adapt to a 3-5-2 system – are former international goakeeper Yasar from Sariyer, sweeper Ercan from Samsun, midfielder Ahmet Suphi from Bursaspor, international centre back Gokhan from Ankaragucu. Yugoslav striker Fadil Vokrri has signed from French club Nimes.

Besiktas have strengthened their attack by signing Denmark striker Lars Elstrup from Luton.

AUSTRIA BY ARTHUR ROTMIL

HICKERSBERGER TO STAY ON

Flowers for Hickensberger.

AUSTRIA'S national team failed miserably in the World Cup and returned home with the worst disciplinary record in the first phase of the tournament, one sending off (Peter Artner) and ten bookings.

Following the fine performances in the preparatory matches (3-2 away win over Spain, 3-2 home success against European champions Holland), expectations were high for 'Italia '90', but then in games against Italy, Czechoslovakia and the USA only two points were gathered.

Yet, the international stars were pleasantly surprised on their return to find some 500 supporters turning up at the airport in Vienna to applaud them.

There were even flowers for the team manager Josef Hickersberger and captain Toni Polster. Yet, Polster was particularly disappointing in Italy and he was even substituted in the last match against the US.

The tug-of-war over the manager has also apparently ended. Hickersberger is set to continue until 1994; a new contract was offered to the 42-year-old former international before the expedition embarked on the Italian job.

The leader of the travelling party and member of the OFB (FA) board, Hans Reitinger, said:

"Hickersberger was our best man at the World Cup. Every word he uttered, every move he made improved our country's image."

Austria were a major disappointment in Italia 90.

WEAH IS AFRICA'S NEW SENSATION

BY BOB PATEMAN

Georges in action for Monaco against Sampdoria in the Cup-winners' Cup semi-final last season.

HE WAS not at the World Cup finals, yet he has been described as potentially the greatest player the world has ever seen.

He has already, at the age of 23, been crowned the best player in Africa. He came to France as an unknown and within months was keeping international Mark Hateley out of the Monaco team.

Last year his goals and his inspiration made Liberia serious contenders for a World Cup place.

He is Georges Weah, a young man whose reputation makes him sound like a combination of Pele and Eusebio.

I took the opportunity of watching the Monaco v Sampdoria Cup-winner's Cup semi-final last season to have a good look at Africa's latest sensation. On the field were some of the biggest names of European football including Italy's Vierchowod and Vialli.

However despite the purchasing power of the lira it was Monaco who had gathered the more glittering array of stars. Indeed it would be difficult to find a more international team than this one.

There was Roger Mendy from Senegal, Diaz from Argentina, Toure a French international of African descent and, of course, there was George Weah.

Weah's physical strength is obvious and his height and muscular build make him look more like a decathlon contestant with a football player. He is also a handsome man, with typical African features which would make him an ideal choice to play "Mr Successful" in those advertising campaigns aimed at selling expensive cars in Lagos.

The match was seven or eight minutes old before we got our first look at Weah's ability. He had wandered into the centre, when he saw the ball coming clear of defence. Instantly he started to run back to the right flank and there was the pass coming over his shoulder and dropping in front of him.

Now it was Weah and Vierchowod, man for man, heading for goal. Vierchowod is no half hearted youngster but Weah had him beaten for speed and power. He almost casually kept the ball away from his opponent and sent over a cross from which Diaz really should have scored.

Two minutes later Weah had the ball in the same spot. Vierchowod came towards him, Weah let him see the ball, the Italian lunged and there was the flick and the sprint – Vierchowod was committed and Weah was past him and free.

Pari, the Italian number four, came racing in from behind to cover but, without glancing back, Weah was instinctively aware of his presence. A second flick of the ball and Weah had left Pari behind. Suddenly it was comic book football – the hero weaving down the wing and leaving a line of defenders stranded on the ground. With the angle too tight for a shot Weah again produced the unexpected – a pass pushed back across the area. Again his opening was wasted.

Nervous

Now, with the Italian flank exposed and nervous, Weah suddenly disappeared from the game. Like all forwards he is dependant on the service given him by the rest of the team and the flow of the game had suddenly changed.

Sampdoria were battling back into contention and for a while it was Roger Mendy who stole the limelight. Mendy is a long-legged giant of a man. He holds his position well and loves to collect the ball from deep positions and move forward, confident in his power to spread the ball around the pitch when challenged. It was certainly his calmness and size that kept Sampdoria at bay during the next ten minutes.

But then, after a period of frustration, Weah was back again. It was a move that came from nowhere. The Italians had a throw in on the Monaco left, but the ball was intercepted and headed forward. There was a lovely first time touch from Dib and suddenly Weah, who had come to the opposite flank, was free and running. He strode on, shadowed by a defender but confident enough in his own speed and strength to let the ball run.

He had the ball within his control without ever touching it and, as he entered the penalty area, he launched a sudden glancing shot. Pagliuca in goal was beaten by the speed of Weah's reactions but the ball glanced inches the wrong side of the post.

Suddenly Weah was back in the heart of the game. A free-kick saw him hovering over the keeper to prey on any half held ball or chance bounce. Then a corner on the right. Again Weah had stationed himself on the far left but this time he started to run. The cross swerved away from the keeper and two defenders moved in to cover the still curving ball. Neither saw Weah explode between them, taking the ball at head height and sending it high into the net.

In the tunnel Weah, sweating and panting, was pulled aside by the French TV station. He was casting eyes towards the dressing room, obviously keen to get back with the team. But this is also part of the job.

The commentator, it seemed, was trying to make him promise to score another goal in the second half. As Weah spoke the TV crew were openly smiling.

"What is the matter?" I asked a friend. The man was a little embarrassed.

"It is Weah's French, it is ... very difficult to understand."

Dirt pitches

It reminds you how far Weah has come in a short time. Only a couple of years ago this young man was living in Libraville, and playing mickey mouse football on dirt pitches. Like all the best local players he ended up playing for Invincible XI, the 'Liverpool' of Liberian football. But Weah was bigger than that. He went on to Tonnere Yaounde in Cameroun where there was a real chance of African honours. He was bigger than that too; 11 games and 16 goals later he was in France.

From Libreville to Monaco is a big jump for anybody and perhaps the surprising point is not that Weah occasionally seems out of place here, but how he seems to have fitted in so well.

The second half opened in very different conditions. Heavy rain was falling. Under floodlights the play seemed all the more intense – and Sampdoria came out determined to close the gap. Vialli was causing the Monaco defence trouble for the first time and Ettori, the Monaco goalkeeper and captain, started to earn his wages.

He seemed grateful to gather one troublesome bouncing shot and his only immediate intention seemed to be to get the ball as far away as possible. His kick sailed long and hard, and there was Weah dashing after it and Pagliuca, the Italian goalkeeper, racing out of his area to kick wide.

This was another side of the man, a natural instinct to see a half chance coming out of nowhere.

Sampdoria now had the ball, Pari moved across the pitch and sent a pass through to Mannini. The full back glanced up, saw nobody was close and took the ball. He failed to see the speed at which Ferratge was closing on him and the French midfield player slid in to rob him. The tackle sent the ball loose and Weah was there. He strode forward, ten, fifteen years – ready it seemed to run at the defence.

Vierchowod was torn between tackling and covering, and Weah played on his moment of hesitation to send a beautiful pass forward to Ferratge. His shot was low, and the wet grass took enough power of the ball to allow Pagliuca to gratefully gather it in his arms.

Monaco certainly needed a goal at this stage for Sampdoria were looking increasingly dangerous. From a dead ball Vierchowod moved up and Weah made a rare journey back into his own penalty area. He bundled in to clear the ball, leaving the Italian centre half collapsed on the ground and the Italians in the crowd screaming for a penalty. The referee however was already running the other way.

Spot on

Then came the disasters. Mendy charged into Vialli and this time the referee did point to the spot. Vialli safely hit the penalty home and minutes later he had the ball in the net again. Suddenly Monaco were behind on their own ground.

Yousef Fofana was now brought from the bench and instantly it became his match – virtually his first touch setting up a goal for Mege. Then he dribbled into the area, a touch left, a touch right, to juggle the ball between two defenders. The move ended up with Fofana on the ground. Penalty? No.

It was another little bit of magic from Africa but, on the night, it wasn't enough. The game had ended 2-2 with the return in Italy still to play.

So what of Weah? It wasn't a great game for him but it was a good game with some great moments. Not a performance which will become a legend, but one which might contribute to a legend.

There were obvious weaknesses too. For a big man he didn't win many 50-50 balls in the air. His clumsy tackle on Vierchowod in his own area showed a carelessness that might have proved costly. Neither did he show that very rarest of skill that Fofana's processes – the ability to take the ball right up to a man and juggle past him when there really doesn't seem any room. Weah's way past a man is use strength and speed, and that requires space.

Still at 23 he has yet to reach his peak and how many players in Europe could have left Vierchowod and Pari for dead the way he did that night?

At the back of my mind however was the question of how many other Africans have promised as much – Fofana himself was, a couple of years ago, going to be the greatest African we had ever seen ...

FRANCE BY ANDRE DUCLOS

Racing back to happiness

Racing Paris ... runners-up in French Cup Final.

WHAT a strange end of season it was to be sure for Racing Paris. Scarcely had they crashed 4-0 in Monte Carlo to a Monaco team previously so short of goals than there they were, a few days later, turning the tables on Marseille and knocking them out in the semi-finals of the Cup.

So on to the Final against Montpellier, a team which had risen somewhat more effectively from the ashes of disaster, and had in fact managed to retain its place in Division I. As, with a last gasp victory at home, 2-0, over Lille, did Graham Rix's Caen.

Rix will as you may know be staying. Not so Brian Stein, victim of such severe knee trouble, who's on his way.

The question is, will Racing Paris survive their descent to the Second Division? And at the time of writing, the omens are not too bade. There is at least one wealthy and determined businessman who hopes to save them. He is Bernard Caizazzo, who last year, when Matra pulled out and things looked so desperate, seemed about to take over the club.

Now here he is, again. He was prepared a year ago to put no less than £6 million into the club which, as the head of a flourishing public relations firm, he appears well able to do. He insists that RC Paris must work in the long term – though goodness knows they gave themselves a wonderful boost in the short term by reaching the Cup Final.

Paris have had a bizarre season of ups and downs. They began very badly, then suddenly produced all kinds of good and unexpected results, capable of beating the very best, Bordeaux and Marseille among them, on their day.

There are players of real merit, especially in midfield. Aziz Bouderbala, the elegant Moroccan, though he did them no favours when he lost his rag and got himself suspended for months.

David Ginola was star of the French under-21 team which won the Toulon tournament three years ago, beating England in the process, and would certainly never have lost 7-3 to England as the French side did, this year. Ben Mabrouk, the bald veteran who himself has got into trouble with his quick temper from time to time, but is beyond doubt a fine club player. How many of these will the club be able to keep, now that they find themselves in Division II?

Staying

Then there is the former Polish international midfielder Henry Kasperczak, now the manager, who says that come what may he will stay in football. In less taxing circumstances, he would probably have kept the team up. As they showed with its gallant victory over a Marseille team in which two goals made by Chris Waddle were not enough, they could beat the best on its day.

Montpellier, their rivals in the Final, took wing when Michel Mezy was appointed the manager in mid season. Even at the end of the season, with the club in the Cup Final and everything looking so much better, he still wasn't absolutely sure he wished to stay.

His up-and-down, pull-devil-pull-baker, relationship with Louis Nicollin, the President of Montpellier, has had something to do with that. So has the unexpected news that the former manager of the club, Robert Nouzaret, is on his way back, leaving Mezy ... where?

Mezy and Nouzaret never got on, and the former French international right half rejects all suggestions that he can be merely a manager, never a general manager or sporting director. He has dropped dark hints about what he might do.

He has no hard words for the man he himself succeeded, Aime Jacquet, once the highly successful manager of Bordeaux. But he admits that when the season began, he and Jacquet might have spoken out more strongly about the signing by Nicollin of the two French internationals, Stephane Paille and Eric Cantona, arrivals which led to what turned out to be a dangerous euphoria. Paille ended the season as a Bordeaux reserve, lucky to get on as a substitute; Cantona as the hero of the French side.

Incensed

Pascal Olmet, the gifted Corsican goalkeeper of whom one has spoken in these pages before, was incensed when he heard that Marseille were not after all it seemed going to buy him from Racing Club at the end of the season.

It was the club he had set his heart on, he declared. It seemed bravado when right after the 4-0 defeat by Monaco, Olmet said he would make Marseille pay for not buying him by seeing Racing beat them in the coming semi-finals. But he was as good as his word.

Good news at long last of Glenn Hoddle. "For the first time for five or six months," announced the Monaco manager, Arsene Wenger, "the doctors are certain that Glenn's knee is perfectly sound."

So keen is Hoddle to start the new season that he did not even take a holiday, but remained in Monte Carlo to work on his fitness, hoping to be there when the club starts pre season training on July 18. Let us hope that the same holds good for the other injured Anglo, Mark Hateley.

Were Nice, who found themselves in the play offs fighting for their First Division life, over-defensive during the season? An odd question to put to Carlos Bianchi the Argentine centre-forward who scores so prolifically for Reims in his heyday. He furiously denied any such things. The only trouble was, he insisted, that Nice had no fewer than three strikers, Bocande, the Senegalese international, Langers, the Luxembourger, and El Haddoui, none of whom would come back to defend.

But critics pointed out that a potentially excellent and dangerous left winger, in the shape of Philippe Mazzuchetti, too often found himself so deep as to be almost in the role of a supplementary left-back, his attacking gifts wasted.

HUNGARY BY BRIAN O'SULLIVAN

Nyilasi takes over at Fradi

FERENCVAROS have appointed Tibor Nyilasi, one of their finest players, as coach for a three-year term after the infusion of capital into the club by a Frenchman, M. Bras.

He sought to take over the football section of the multi-sports club, in the densely-populated, ninth, district of the capital, but the club's presidium refused. The financial backing, of an undisclosed amount, became dependent on Nyilasi being appointed.

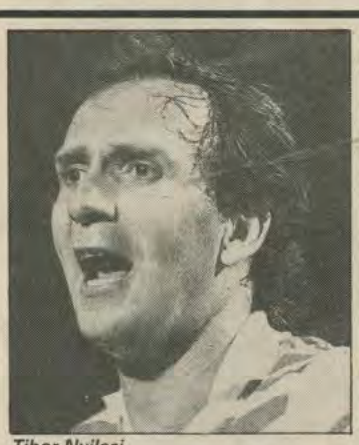
Florian Albert, Nyilasi's alter ego, and Gyula Rakosi, having guided the team through another improved season even if Fradi did not challenge for the title, can take a well-deserved rest. Returning home for the new season to Ulloiut will be Pal Fischer, from Ajax, the Dutch champions, and Attila Pinter, from Beerschot, in Belgium.

Ujpest Dozsa won the league title on the last day of the season by a single goal from MTK-VM, who had led the race for the previous eight rounds.

The matches of the final round had the same kick-off time (shades of match-fixing scandals past!), Dozsa beating Budapest Honved 2-0 while MTK-VM lost 2-1 at Vac. Dozsa and MTK-VM thus finished with 58 points and respective goal figures of 43-20 and 48-26. Ferencvaros, for whom Jozsef Dzurjak was the leading scorer in the championship with 18 goals, and Pecs MSC were ten points adrift, five ahead of Tatabanya.

Csepel and Halada's, of Szombathely, were relegated, to be replaced by Szeged and Volan, of Budapest. Honved, in their worst season since being formed in 1949, and Debrecen survived the play-offs with Dunafeer, previously called Dunaujvaros, and Kazincbarcika, of the Second Division.

The competitiveness of the championship was an improvement on the previous season, when penalty shoot-outs were used to decide drawn matches. Next season the league will return to the former points system of two for a win and one for a draw.


Tibor Nyilasi.

Dozsa, despite their success, had problems in the football section and dismissed Istvan Varga, their coach, who has moved to Siofok. Imre Gellei, who had been in charge there, has accepted a post in Kuwait.

Honved, having to come to terms with reduced support in the wake of political changes, at least had the consolation of reaching the Hungarian Cup final, only to lose 2-0 to Pecs. An improvement is as hand, however.

Gyorgy Mezey, whose coaching guided Hungary to their most recent appearance in the World Cup finals, in Mexico in 1986, returned early in the year from Finland and saw the season out with Videoton-Waltham. He has agreed a two-year contract with Honved and joining him at the revamped Bozsik stadion will be Zsolt Petry, the goalkeeper of Videoton, Ervin Kovacs, the central defender from Dozsa, as well as Janos Zsinka, who had been at Bekescsaba on loan. Mezey was employed by Hungarian television (MTV) at the World Cup.

The national team ended the season with Kalman Meszoly still in charge despite a Court of Appeal decision that Bertalan Bicskei had been unfairly dismissed. Meszoly's second term began after the World Cup qualifying group matches and the results were 2-0 v United States, 1-3 v France, 0-3 v Austria in Salzburg, 3-0 v United Arab Emirates and 3-1 v Colombia.

Imre Garaba, now with Charleroi, was recalled for the last two matches in which one of his former team-mates at Honved, Kalman Koyacs, scored five of the six goals: all three against the UAE and two against the Colombians. He had scored once in his previous 26 matches. Life in France with Auxerre seems to have done wonders to this light-footed, tricky, winger, and the Hungarian spirit has been appreciated by at least one Frenchman.

AFRICA NOTEBOOK

FROM MARK GLEESON

NEW LOOK FOR NATIONS' CUP

FOR the first time, qualification for the African Nations Cup is to be played on a round-robin basis with the first group matches scheduled for August.

The new format has been brought in now that the number of teams competing in the final tournament, to be played next in Senegal in 1992, have been increased from eight to 12.

Holders Algeria, who won their first Nations Cup at home in March, and hosts Senegal are already in the final line-up for 1992, but given the growing competitiveness of teams in Africa, the other eight places are far from decided.

The eight groups have an element of geographical proximity, although not as blatantly as the Confederation of Africa Football have rigged in the past.

Two of the groups feature five nations, the rest four apiece. Two countries will come through from the larger groups to make up the 10 qualifiers. This means both Morocco and Ivory Coast should be among the starters in Senegal despite being paired in Group 3 and former holders Ghana have a chance to re-establish their form of the 70s in Group 4.

On current form, the other likely finalists are Africa's World Cup representatives Cameroon and Egypt; Kenya, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Only Zimbabwe have not been to the finals before, but they have an excellent chance this time round after being paired with Malawi, Congo and the Seychelles in Group 7. Malawi's new look team is still going through a rebuilding phase, while Congo have not been able to field a team of the calibre of that that won the 1972 Nations Cup.

The first games will be played on the weekend of 17-19 August with 16 matches scheduled.

The continent's two club competitions have reached the quarter-final stage with an impressive array of quality teams left in the Africa Champions Cup, but the Cup Winners' Cup again full of surprises. Only five of the eight quarter-finalists in the Champions are known at this stage, with three second round matches still to be decided. Two games involving Cameroon and Egyptian teams were postponed because of the World Cup finals in Italy, while the second round, second leg match between Etoile Congo and Algeria's JS Kabylie still had to be played. Nevertheless, the likes of two-time winner Ashanti Kotoko and former finalist Iwuanyanwu Nationale are through, having scored impressive wins. Kotoko, heralding something of a comeback for struggling Ghanian football, beat 1985 winners Royal Armed Forces of Morocco 4-3 on aggregate, while Iwuanyanwu, from Owerri in Nigeria, edged Ivorian stalwarts Africa Sports by the same high-scoring aggregate scoreline.

El Hilal, beaten in the final in 1987, scrapped through on the away goals rule, but there was a more emphatic win for Nkana Red Devils of Zambia, who have been semi-finalists three times in the last seven years.

Red Devils, with several internationals in their team, beat minnows Arsenals of Lesotho 8-1 on aggregate in the biggest victory of the round. Arsenals, who had surprised by beating Ferroviario Maputo of Mozambique in the first round, lost the first leg at home by three goals and were further humbled in the return in Kitwe where Beston Chambeshi, who has been ditched by the national team, netted the opener and Kenneth Malitoli (two), Kapambwe Mulenge and Godfrey Muselepete added the rest.

Thato Muhale's late consolation gave the Basotho's a late moment of glory at the end of an impressive (by their standards) run in the tournament. AFC Leopards, who have lived in the shadow of fellow Kenya club Gor Mahia, are also through with an easy 4-1 aggregate win over Sunrise of Mauritius.

In the Cup-winners' Cup, holders El Merriekh needed a penalty shoot-out to dispose of Gabon's Petrosports and clinch a quarter-final berth. The Sudanese clawed back from a two-goal first leg deficit to level the aggregate score and then take the penalty shoot-out 4-3. El Merreikh are the only team in the quarter-final line-up with any previous success at continental level and head up a pretty open field in this competition.

Stiff opposition is expected to come from Tunisia's Club Africain, whose 4-1 aggregate drubbing of Maghreb Fez of Morocco was one of several shock results in the round. Senegal's US Ouakam, making their debut in this tournament, continued on their giant killing run with a one goal victory over Requins Atlantique of Benin – but scored the winner with only 13 minutes left of the second leg.

In the first round they upset Tonnerre Yaounde of Cameroon, who had several representatives in that country's World Cup squad in Italy. BTM of Madagascar and Grupo Desportivo Maputo of Mozambique are also through to add to the list of unfancied sides. BTM qualified on the away goal rules over Kenya Breweries, while Desportivo clawed back to a remarkable victory over Red Arrows, the Zambian Air Force team.

Mutale and Mussanga had Arrows two-up within 32 minutes of the first leg in Maputo, but the Mozambicans staged a fightback with goals from internationals Chababe (penalty), Butana and Dinis to win 3-2. Then in the return in Zambia a goalless draw saw them become the first Mozambican side to beat a Zambian team in continental competition. Vital'O of Burundi, Ghana's Hearts of Oak and BCC Lions, the Nigerian team who overcame a 0-2 loss in the first leg of their second round match against Diables Noirs of Congo, make up the quarter-final line-up.

MOZAMBIQUE: European Cup finalists Benfica, minus their Brazilian and Swedish continent, drew 1-1 with Costa do Sol in Maputo on their post-season tour. Garrincha scored 31 minutes for the hosts, with Beloso equalising eight minutes later for the Portuguese, who fielded the strongest possible team given their missing players at the World Cup.

MOROCCO: Wydad Casablanca have a four point lead going into the final stages of the championship, with last year's champions Royal Armed Forces doing them a favour by holding second placed Tangier to a draw in a key match.

NIGERIA: JIB Rocks are the early leaders in the Nigerian first division ahead of Enugu Rangers and BCC Lions.

Algeria – 1990 Cup winners.

Cameroon hope to repeat their Italia 90 form in the Africa Nations Cup.

18TH AFRICAN NATIONS CUP
SENEGAL 1992

GROUP 1: Cameroon, Guinea, Mali, Sierre Leone
GROUP 2: Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, Tunisia
GROUP 3: Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger
GROUP 4: Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Nigeria, Togo
GROUP 5: Angola, Madagascar, Swaziland, Zambia
GROUP 6: Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, Sudan
GROUP 7: Congo, Malawi, Seychelles, Zimbabwe
GROUP 8: Gabon, Tanzania, Uganda, Zaire

THE MATCHES – PRELIMINARY ROUND

Mauritania – Gambia 2-0 1-2

17-19 AUGUST

Cameroon – Mali
Guinea – Sierre Leone
Egypt – Ethiopia
Tunisia – Chad
Zambia – Swaziland
Angola – Madagascar
Kenya – Mauritius
Sudan – Mozambique
Malawi – Congo
Zimbabwe – Seychelles
Gabon – Uganda
Zaire – Tanzania
Cote d'Ivoire – Madagascar
Morocco – Niger
Nigeria – Togo
Burkina Faso – Benin

31 AUGUST, 1-2 SEPTEMBER

Sierre Leone – Cameroon
Mali – Guinea
Chad – Egypt
Ethiopia – Tunisia
Madagascar – Zambia
Swaziland – Angola
Mozambique – Kenya
Mauritius – Sudan
Seychelles – Malawi
Congo – Zimbabwe
Tanzania – Gabon
Uganda – Zaire
Liberia – Ivory Coast
Morocco – Mauritania
Ghana – Nigeria
Burkina Faso – Togo

28-30 SEPTEMBER

Niger – Ivory Coast
Mauritania – Liberia
Benin – Nigeria
Togo – Ghana

12-14 OCTOBER

Liberia – Morocco
Niger – Mauritania
Ghana – Burkina Faso
Benin – Togo

11-13 JANUARY 1991

Morocco – Ivory Coast
Liberia – Mauritania
Burkina Faso – Nigeria
Ghana – Benin

25-27 JANUARY

Mauritania – Ivory Coast
Niger – Morocco
Togo – Nigeria
Benin – Burkina Faso

12-14 APRIL

Guinea – Cameroon
Mali – Sierre Leone
Tunisia – Egypt
Ethiopia – Chad
Angola – Zambia
Swaziland – Madagascar
Sudan – Kenya
Mauritius – Mozambique
Zimbabwe – Malawi
Congo – Seychelles
Zaire – Gabon
Uganda – Tanzania
Ivory Coast – Liberia
Mauritania – Morocco
Nigeria – Ghana
Togo – Burkina Faso

26-28 APRIL

Mali – Cameroon
Sierre Leone – Guinea
Ethiopia – Egypt
Chad – Tunisia
Swaziland – Zambia
Madagascar – Angola
Mauritius – Kenya
Mozambique – Sudan
Congo – Malawi
Seychelles – Zimbabwe
Uganda – Gabon
Tanzania – Zaire
Ivory Coast – Niger
Liberia – Mauritania
Niger – Benin
Ghana – Togo

12-14 JULY

Cameroon – Sierre Leone
Guinea – Mali
Egypt – Chad
Tunisia – Ethiopia
Zambia – Madagascar
Angola – Swaziland
Kenya – Mozambique
Sudan – Mauritius
Malawi – Seychelles
Zimbabwe – Congo
Gabon – Tanzania
Zaire – Uganda
Morocco – Liberia
Mauritania – Niger
Burkina Faso – Ghana
Togo – Benin

26-28 JULY

Cameroon – Guinea
Sierre Leone – Mali
Egypt – Tunisia
Zambia – Angola
Madagascar – Swaziland
Kenya – Sudan
Mozambique – Mauritius
Malawi – Zimbabwe
Seychelles – Congo
Gabon – Zaire
Tanzania – Uganda
Ivory Coast – Morocco
Niger – Liberia
Nigeria – Burkina Faso
Benin – Ghana

Egypt are one of the favourites for the Final.

A midfield battle between Algeria and Nigeria during the 1990 Final.

Z MEN FACE TO FACE

FROM MARK GLEESON

NEIGHBOURS Zambia and Zimbabwe will contest this month's final of the South African Development Co-ordination Conference 10th anniversary tournament.

The two nations won through to the final in Gaborone on August 25 with semi-final wins in Lusaka on April 1 – but they had contrasting fortunes. For while Zambia had a comfortable 2-0 win over Tanzania, Zimbabwe were pushed all the way by the minnows of Swaziland.

It was only after post-match penalties that the Zimbabweans won through at the end of a pulsating game that saw the two nations deadlocked at 4-4 at the end of extra time. Swaziland were surprise qualifiers through to the semifinals in the nine nation tournament, comprising member states of the economic union formed to lessen southern Africa's dependence on apartheid South Africa.

The Swazis had won through, along with Tanzania, from the Group A qualifiers, hosted in Mbabane in January, while Zimbabwe and Zambia were the winners in Group B, which was played in Maputo, Mozambique in March.

Extra-time

Swaziland and Zimbabwe were level at 2-2 at the end of 90 minutes and then both went on to score a further two goals apiece in extra time.

The tit-for-tat scoring continued in the penalty shoot-out until Swazi sweeper Brian Sibanze had his kick saved by Zimbawean goalkeeper John Sibanda and Zimbabwe had won through 5-4 on penalties.

They now meet Zambia in the final in Gaborone, Botswana, which is the site of the headquarters of SADCC. Swaziland have been invited to meet Botswana in the curtain raiser on the same day.

In Group B in Maputo, a thrilling final match saw Zimbabwe and Zambia just scrape into the semifinals ahead of their Mozambican hosts. Going into the final day's play of the five day tournament, it seemed Zambia and Mozambique were best placed to make it to the semifinal stage.

The Zambians, who were fielding a second string with their first team at the African Nations Cup finals in Algeria, had won their opening three games in convincing style and were looking stronger as the tournament progressed.

Mozambique had won a morale boosting victory against the difficult Zimbabweans with a 3-1 win that had the meagre crowd at the Machava stadium roaring their approval the day before.

Now, the hosts needed only to score convincingly against hapless Lesotho to secure their passage and when they won 3-0 in the opening game of the double header feature on the last day, it seemed they had done enough.

A draw would be sufficient for Zambia, but Zimbabwe had other ideas and gave notice of their intentions in the final game when Francis Shonhai blasted home a spectacular long range free kick just before half time. Had the result stayed at 1-0, it would have meant Zambia would have lost out on qualification through an inferior goal difference.

The game stayed at 1-0 until 11 minutes from time when substitute Goodwill Katango brought the young Zambians back level with his first of the tournament. This seemingly eliminated Zimbabwe from the running, but if the Zimbabweans managed to take the lead again, Mozambique would now be eliminated.

Hold firm

The crowd were well aware of that and willed the Zambian defence to hold firm as Zimbabwe came back onto the attack. Understandably, there was stunned silence with just five minutes left when diminutive striker Adam Ndlovu nipped in to score for 2-1 win for Zimbabwe.

All three countries ended on six points from four games with a goal difference of plus four. Zimbabwe topped the group by virtue of having scored nine goals to the Zambian and Mozambicans' eight in the tournament. Zambia were given the second berth by virtue of the fact they had beaten Mozambique 2-0 in earlier group play. Angola and Lesotho, the other two nations in this group, played below par.

In Group A, Tanzania and Swaziland qualified ahead of Botswana and Malawi, who were fielding an experimental team of mainly youth team players, with only a handful of previously capped players in the squad. The Malawians went out without losing a game.

GROUP A (Mbabane, Swaziland)
Swaziland 3 Botswana I; Malawi 2 Tanzania 2; Swaziland 0 Tanzania 1; Botswana 2 Malawi 2; Botswana 0 Tanzania 0; Swaziland 0 Malawi 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tanzania	3	1	2	0	3	2	4
Swaziland	3	1	1	1	3	2	3
Malawi	3	0	3	0	4	4	3
Botswana	3	0	2	1	3	5	2

GROUP B (Maputo, Mozambique)
Lesotho 0 Zambia B 2, Mozambique 2 Angola 1; Lesotho 1 Zimbabwe 4; Angola 0 Zimbabwe 2; Mozambique 0 Zambia B 2; Angola 2 Zambia B 3; Angola 3 Lesotho 1; Mozambique 3 Zimbabwe 1; Mozambique 3 Lesotho 0; Zambia B 1 Zimbabwe 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zimbabwe	4	3	0	1	9	5	6
Zambia	4	3	0	1	8	4	6
Mozambique	4	3	0	1	8	4	6
Angola	4	1	0	3	6	8	2

SEMIFINALS (Lusaka, Zambia): Swaziland 4 Zimbabwe 4 (Zimbabwe won 5-4 on pens); Zambia 2 Tanzania 0.

LETTERS

Penalty shoot-outs are so unfair

Sir – WHILE penalty shoot-outs are distinctly better than the toss of a coin there surely must be a big effort made to come up with a more suitable solution for deciding drawn games in future World Cups and other big games if, as seems to be the case, that replays are a non-starter due to the tight schedules of TV, etc.

Alternative methods that have been muted include corner-counts, foul-counts and playing on until one team scores. However, the problem with the first two is that they could affect the shape of the actual game itself with teams making a conscious effort to win free-kicks and corners; and after some of the theatricals that have been one of the features of the World Cup surely this is not the road to go down.

The suggestion of playing on until one side scores also has the drawback that, in some instances, the side could still be playing until dawn!

However, perhaps a modified form of that idea could prove a more suitable solution.

If, after extra-time, the scores are still level, play should then continue for a further 30 minutes with the first goal scored during this sudden-death period deciding the outcome.

But, to help ensure that goal is scored during this period the numbers of both sides could be reduced to create extra space and increase the likelihood of a goal being scored.

So, at the start of the 'sudden-death' period both sides should, say, take off four players; then, if after a further 15 minutes there still isn't a winner, two more could go off leaving both sides with only five on the pitch (unless they have had players sent-off, in which they would have even less – an apt penalty).

If, after this final 15 minutes, a winning goal has still not been scored (surely an unlikely event) then both sides could surely not argue about the outcome being decided by a penalty shoot-out! – L.BRENNAN, Glebe Village, Washington, Tyne and Wear.

SIR – ONE of the mostly debated issues of this year's World Cup has been the inadequacy of penalty kicks to resolve a drawn match.

In a tightly schedules competition such as the World Cup a replay is obviously not the answer and the 'football experts' have been divided over a solution to this problem.

Keeping count of the number of corners awarded to each team as a measure of attacking play has been a favourite for a long time.

Similar solutions propose a count of fouls, number of yellow cards etc. These, in my opinion, are unacceptable simply because a team which has earned more corners has not necessarily been the better team and a count of fouls will send players diving onto the pitch.

The suggestion that teams should continue playing after the 90 minutes and extra time until a goal is scored will result in matches being resolved not by skilful play as they should be but by a player's mistake as a result of excessive tiredness.

It was interesting to see, while watching half-time or post-match analysis of the World Cup games, that although the commentators/analysts clearly disagreed over an alternative to penalty kicks, they would always unanimously agree that 'Team X deserve to win this game because they have played better' or 'Team Y did not deserve to win on penalties because they performed badly'.

To them and me and (I am certain) millions of other TV viewers it was obvious which team had played better, so why can't drawn matches be resolved based on simple qualitative statements such as these. – M.ZADEHKOOCHAK, Glenwood Avenue, Bassett, Southampton.

Scandalous

SIR – ONCE again the World Cup leaves a bitter taste in the mouth. The poor refereeing, cheating players and the inappropriate penalty kick competition all work to debase the World Cup. FIFA's refusal to even recognise the existence of the problem with penalties is quite scandalous. In the end FIFA got the World Cup Final they deserved.

I would like to suggest a more appropriate system to replace penalties. It has two main features:-

1) At the end of 90 minutes the principle of "first goal wins" should come into play. The 15 minutes each way of extra time should be done away with. Instead, teams should play consecutive fifteen minute extra time periods which will end immediately one team scored.

2) More substitutes should be allowed during the extra time periods over and above the two allowed during the 90 minutes. I would suggest three substitutes per period of extra time starting with the named substitutes. Subsequent squad members (those not named in the first 11 or in the 5 substitutes) should become available for selection at the end of the first period of extra time.

The liberal use of substitutes would allow matches to continue with fresh players making a positive result more likely. The system has the advantage of working against those teams with suspended players. – T. TEWSON, Fenn Road, Barnsley.

Pluck of the Irish

SIR – I am disgusted with the anything but professional approach of the British commentators and writers. I am sick of hearing about how great the Irish side is, and how wonderful their achievements are.

Apart from the passion and the spirit they play the game with, they have absolutely nothing to hold up. Style, variety, and artistry are virtually non-existent in their players ... and those are what football is all about.

Finally, I will surely have a heart attack if I ever hear the term "Luck of the Irish".

Let me take this opportunity to congratulate you (one more time) on the best Soccer magazine around. – C VAN GRAAP, Brighton Road, Ontario, Canada.

Waddle misses England's vital spot-kick against West Germany.

Brazil of target

SIR – I am not a Brazilian but once again I felt a huge disappointment on the elimination of Brazil from the World Cup. The quarter final stages and beyond were rather "flat" without Brazil.

Despite the chaotic organisation of their internal leagues, Brazil continue to produce brilliant and skilful footballers and if managed properly and with luck could have won the last two World Cups plus this one.

The current squad of 22 are talented and possess great technique but perhaps the criticism levied on Mr Lazaroni by Pele and Socrates do hold some truth.

To score only four goals in four games is not what we expected from Brazil! The loss against Argentina was certainly unlucky and it would seem that no matter how long the game went on, Brazil would not score!

Having watched several times videos of their group games with Sweden, Costa Rica and Scotland, it was apparent that Muller is more of a winger, with his speed, rather than a striker to partner Careca.

If Brazil's elimination was disappointing it was not unexpected – because the current side is so defensive that if the opponents score first, then Brazil will have problems. My plea to the CBF – get your house in order. The people of Brazil deserve more when the next World Cup comes around. – T. LEES, Whemnay Avenue, Kent.

Ace Atkinson

SIR – YOU will probably receive a large mail bag on the appalling TV commentaries which accompanied a wonderful Italia 90 and can there really be any excuses for the blatant racism and 'fear of foreigners' from the crews at BBC and ITV.

Only one 'link' man to the main commentary can escape criticism and that was Ron Atkinson. What a joy to hear someone who actually understands the game and has some deep technical knowledge of foreign teams and players. Well done, Ron (Venables and Brooking also had their 'moments').

Lastly can I congratulate you on a magnificent World Cup issue – it was a blessing to find a magazine that writes intelligently and in depth on the sport. – N. GANSELL, Cornard Road, Sudbury, Suffolk.

Gazza the great.

SIR – ENGLISH football can hold it's head high after England's performance against the Germans. If the referee had given a penalty for a blatant foul in the area by Augenthaler on Chris Waddle it could have been so different.

We showed we are not as far behind the so-called technically better mainland Europeans, if indeed we are.

One thing for sure we did possess the star of the tournament, Paul Gascoigne. I hope the Germans were proud of the disgraceful antics of Thomas Berthold and the German bench to get "Gazza" booked. He totally overshadowed the over-rated Matthaus.

The refereeing standard has been very poor, for this FIFA must take a large part of the blame for putting them under pressure, some of the sendings-off for example were ridiculous Moravcik (Cze v Germany), Voller (German v Holland) to name but two.

We had the ridiculous sight of referees telling players to tuck their shirts in whilst blatant cheating, such as rolling over and feigning injury, which happily is something the majority of British players do not do, was left unpunished.

A lot has been made of how lucky England were, I reply to that by, how much did they have in Mexico when a hand-ball goal beat them? Or hitting the woodwork in Germany in 1988? – D. SHANNON, Edward Road, Wallsend, Tyne & Wear.

PEN PALS

17-YEAR-OLD NIGERIAN, fan of Everton and Tottenham, seeks pen pals in England, Italy or Spain. Write to Olalekan Odewole, 16 Olayinka Street, Itire-Ijesha, Surulere, Lagos, Nigeria.

STUDENT wants pen pals from Britain, Holland, Italy and Belgium who share his interests in collecting sports magazines, photos and any information on soccer songs. Readers should contact Samuel Onusu-Kusi, PO Box 1628, Sunyani, B/A Ghana.

NIGERIAN reader, 25, whose hobbies include listening to music, exchanging coins, stamps and football souvenirs seeks pen friends. Write to: Teddy Ephraim, Federal Ministry of Health, Medical Laboratory Maintenance Workshop, PMB 2010, Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria.

TANZANIAN student wants pen pals from al over the world. His interests include travelling, music and all sports. Contact Mr Kenny, PO Box 1832 Mbeya, Tanzania.

EVERTON fan would like to hear from any soccer supporters from France, Spain, Italy, Holland, Portugal or Belgium. Please write in English to: Nick Cavanagh, 35 Ardcroy Rd, Croy, Inverness, IV1 2PL.

20-YEAR-OLD RUSSIAN READER seeks pen pals world wide. Write to: Alexander Merkulow, 190068 Leningrad, Pt Maiotowa 55-47, Soviet Union.

MORROCAN student seeks pen pals to exchange ideas on the game. Write to: Barisi Bouchaib, El Houfra, No 24 Bois, Azemmour, Morocco.

LIVERPOOL fan seeks pen pals from around the world. Contact: CS Leong, 4 Vacy St, Toowooba, Queensland 4350, Australia.

20-YEAR-OLD student seeks pen pals from around the world especially Spain, Scandinavia, France, United States, Canada and Brazil. All letters will be answered. Please write in English to: Allen Bouchereau, 22 Inlet View, Titahi Bay, Wellington, New Zealand.

TURKISH READER, 19, wants to correspond with European and Australian fans aged between 15-20. All letters answered. Write to: Atil Yilmoz, Dokuz Eylul, Universitesi, IIBF Denizcilik IS Yon, Buca, Izmir, Turkey.

EXCHANGES

UKRANIAN reader would like to swap posters, flags, scarves, pennants, magazines, programmes, badges and other souvenirs from the Soviet Union for England and Ireland soccer souvenirs. Please write to: Dmitry Pobedash, Syretskaia Street 42/44, Flat 17, 252073 Kiev, Ukraine, Soviet Union.

BULGARIAN reader who follows English soccer wants to swap his collection of soccer autographs for pennants, souvenirs, badges etc. Please write in English, Spanish or Dutch to: Atanas Gospoolinov, Atanasov, BG 6312, Poolkrepa (Haskovsko) Bulgaria

WORLD CUP collector looking for match tickets from Italia 90 in exchange for programmes and many other soccer souvenirs. Please write to: Frederic Bouillon, 381 Rue de Baume, 7161 Haine St OPaul, Belgium.

WANTED

MARCH or May issue of World Soccer wanted for South African reader. Contact: Ebrahim Laher, PO Box 18427, Axctonville, 1506, South Africa.

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ASIAN NOTEBOOK

FROM
PAUL MOON
BOB PATEMAN
PETER BURNS

Like all members of the UEA World Cup squad, Juma Thani was withdrawn from club action during the League season.

Al Hilal beaten in Champions Final

AL HILAL of Saudi Arabia failed at the last hurdle in their bid to land the Arab Champions' Cup.

Urged on by a 35,000 strong crowd in Casablanca, Morocco's Al Wadad defeated Al Hilal 3-1. Both teams were playing their sixth game in 14 days and, not surprisingly, looked jaded.

Al Wadad always had a distinct edge though and two goals by Nader and one from tournament leading scorer Moussa N'Dawi clinched matters before Youssouf Althnayyan, a second half substitute, claimed a Saudi consolation five minutes from time.

Ten teams from all corners of the Arab world congregated in Morocco for the event, which was generally considered a success – despite attendances for games not featuring Moroccan teams being disappointing. The early rounds, in particular, produced some entertaining football.

Future tournaments might benefit by being extended to three weeks in duration or having the number of participants reduced to eight to give teams adequate time between matches.

Entente Setif win Afro-Asian

AI Sadd of Qatar were no match for Algeria's much more experienced Entente Setif in the fourth Afro-Asian Champions' Cup.

The Algerian side gained a 2-0 lead from their home leg with goals by Ben Jaballah and Gharib. In the return at Doha, Al Sadd had no answer to Entente's counter-attacking style and the quicksilver Ben Jaballah grabbed another couple of goals, to add to Adjissa's first half strike, before Gassam claimed a late consolation goal from the penalty spot for the Qataris.

Setif won 5-1 on aggregate but only 18,000 fans watched the two games.

WORLD CUP SUITS AL SHABAB

THE order that all United Arab Emirates national team men be withdrawn from the league championship suited Al Shabab. They had only two internationals, goalkeeper Abdulkader Hassan and centre forward Issa Sankour.

But the country's three biggest clubs were all badly hit. Last year's champions Sharjah 'lost' five men, including keeper Muhsin Musabah, defenders Ibrahim and Eisa Meer and midfielders Ali Thani Juma and Abdul Aziz Mohamed. Al Nasr 'lost' four players and Al Wasl five, including Fahad and Nasser Khamis and forward Zoheir Bakheet.

Al Shabab took full advantage. They finished level on points with Al Wasl at the top of the table, then won the play-off after going a goal down in seven minutes.

Under 19's

On the international front, the Emirates will host the Asian under-16 finals in October. In the Asian under-19 event, the Emirates are in group one along with Oman, Bahrain and group hosts Saudi Arabia.

SAUDI ARABIA: Al Hilal clinched the league title on the very last day of the season. Their 8-0 thrashing of relegation-found Al Raed carried them two points clear of Al Ahly – who had rivalled them in a two-horse title race all the way from the season's halfway stage.

Attendances were good but seven managers were dismissed in midseason, including national team boss Carlos Alberto Parreira. He was blamed for the Saudis' poor results in the World Cup qualifying decider. Many local observers felt a more serious cause was the poor preparation and warm-up match schedule organised (or not, as the case may be) by the federation.

Carlos Alberto, of course, did well enough at the World Cup finals with the slim resources of the UAE and may shortly be reappointed national manager of his native Brazil.

Some failure!

KUWAIT: Minnows Al Jabaa won the league title for the first time, against all the odds since they had started the season as most people's tip for relegation.

The discovery of the season was Al Jabaa goalkeeper Motir Sherkat, a 24-year-old who conceded only six goals in 19 matches. Key striker was Nawaf Jedid, whose six goals made him second-top scorer in the championship.

On the sporting politics front, Sheikh Fahd Al-Ahmed Al-Sabbah (the man whose flowing robes appeared on the pitch at the 1982 World Cup-tie between Kuwait and France) has become a FIFA vice-president.

LEBANON: Soccer is thriving, at least among the Arab community, despite the country's desperate problems. A 45,000 crowd saw this year's cup final in which Al-Neejmeh beat Tadamon of the newly – formed second division by 4-0. No clubs from Lebanon's Christian areas entered the competition.

Last year's Champions Sharjah were "robbed" of five top players, including the Meer twins Eisa (left) and Ibrahim.

Pakistan keep it tight

PAKISTAN gained a rare international success when winning the South Asian Federation Games' gold medals at the Jinnah Stadium in Islamabad.

These were acquired primarily through a resolute defence which did not concede a single goal in the tournament.

Having been by far the more atttractive side in the preliminary games. Bangladesh went into the final as favourite but never looked capable of breaching the hosts' rearguard.

Pakistan's strikers also had little penetration and it was not until the last minute that Abdul Sattar scored the game's only goal, much to the joy of a patriotic, 40,000 strong crowd.

India defeated Nepal 2-1 in the third place play off. Sri Lanka and the Maldive Islands also participated in the tournament.

INDIA: Esteghal, the Iranian army side, have won the latest edition of the Delhi Cloth Mills Tournament – among the most popular of India's numerous invitation competitions – at New Delhi.

They defeated Pohang Iron and Steel Company (an amateur team, not to be confused with Pohang Atoms, the professional side which represents the company in South Korea's Superleague) 3-1 in the final.

Foreign entrants dominated the tournament, with only one Indian – East Bengal – reaching the semifinals

Gold Cup

Perhaps India would have fared better if the country's perennial power, Mohun Bagan, had been competiting. They preferred to participate in the Sikkim Governor's Gold Cup staged a week earlier and took the trophy home to Calcutta after beating traditional local rivals Mohamedan Sporting in the final. Sukhen Sengputa scored the encounter's only goal in the 61st minute.

BANGLADESH: After being cancelled in 1987 and 1988, due to climatic and political storms respectively, Bangladesh's national championship – the Shere-Bangla Cup – was resumed this year.

So eager was the Bangladesh Football Federation to ensure the competition's success that it made participation compulsory for each of the 64 teams (representing district associations, the armed services, universities and government departments) which are eligible to enter.

After a series of preliminary tournaments had reduced the competing teams down to 13, the survivors congreated at the provincial city of Noakhali for the final round which was staged over a two week period.

The final between Dhaka University and the Bangladesh Army combination proved to be an evely balanced affair until just after half time when the students scored twice within two minutes. They went on to win 3-1.

University winger Sabbir was adjudged Player of the Tournament.

HOME IS NOT ALL IT SEEMS IN CHINA

THE Chinese national championship is intending to use a 'home and away' system for the first time this year.

However once the details were published it was clear that any 'home' or 'away' advantage would be more symbolic than realistic. Because of the immence distances and costs involved in travelling the championship will be played at three venues – Kunming, Guiyang and Guangzhou.

Guiyang and Guangzhou both have teams in the championship and they will play their matches at home. The other ten sides in the first division will meet in Kunming where, for each match, one of the sides will be designated as the 'home' team. The 'away' team will have every goal scored counted as two goals!

A spokesman of the Football Association said: "We can't call the championship a real home and away competition. But we have to make do with what we can at the moment".

FA president Nian Weisi has called on the players to provide better entertainment for the spectators so as to consolidate the recent increase in attendance at top matches. Last year first division games attracted an average of 10,000, a considerable improvement on the downward trend of previous years. A first division ticket costs around 20 fen – about two and half pence.

Another move towards a more 'professional' system was the recent publication of rules to govern transfers. The new regulations not only make it possible for players to move between clubs but also set guidelines for the fees involved. A club signing a first division player from a rival side should pay no less than 20,000 yuan (£2,500) with the fee being halved for second division clubs. The CFA will claim 20 per cent of any fees paid.

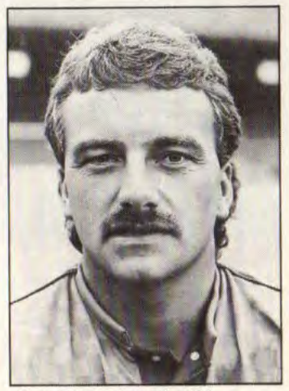
The same regulations confirmed that players will not be allowed to leave China to play overseas until they reach 28. This, however, does not prevent the CFA from loaning young players to overseas clubs for them to gain experience.

Former Rangers player John Spencer, now with Lai Sung.

JAPAN: Nissan's domestic stranglehold was loosened during the final of the 1990 Emperor's Cup (the 68th version of the event) – but only briefly.

When Brazilian striker Andrew scored twice within nine minutes in the second half, to put Yamaha 2-0 up, a surprise appeared on the cards. However, it only took Nissan ten minutes to get back onto level terms, through goals by Lopez and Renato, before Sano completed the holder's comeback with a late winner.

Nissan had earlier won the League Cup and now need only to retain the League title for an unprecedented "double treble."



Tony Henry a favourite with Hiroshima Mazda.

HONG KONG: South China's inevitable and unstoppable march towards the league title took a minor dent when they dropped a point against Club. It was the first point they had dropped since their defeat in the opening game of the season.

The arrival of Mick Waitt at Lai Sun brought John Spencer's steady stream of goals to an end. With a big man in the middle to aim for the side started to send over more high crosses, which hardly suited the 19-year-old from Glasgow.

Bill Foulkes's Hiroshima Madza team just missed out on promotion to the first division. He introduced three British players to the side, Tony Henry, David Hodgson and Alan Irvine.

Hodgson, a former Liverpool and England under-21 player, was the best known but his season was ruined by injuries. Henry, who came to the land of the rising sun via Oldham, Manchester City and Stoke, had a happier time and was a great favourite of the local fans.

Surprise finish in Vietnam

DONG Thap were surprise winners of Vietnam's last regionalised championship.

The new championship will be contested by an elite 18-team Supreme League on a home-and-away basis. The A1 will contain 16 teams and will effectively become the national second division.

The 1989 A1 championship began with two teams pulling out before a ball was kicked. Both promoted Do Luong Hanoi and Cong Nghiep Ha Nam Ninh, the 1985 champions, cited financial difficulties as the reason for withdrawing. Both have been relegated to A2.

The remaining 32 clubs were divided into three groups for the first round, with the top seven in each progressing to the second round and the three bottom clubs taking the drop to A2.

Like their Soviet allies, the Vietnamese also have a fondness for playing around with the traditional league points system. In the first round, any draws in excess of three were not awarded any points. Draws were settled from the penalty spot in the second round, with the penalty-kick winners being awarded an extra goal in their 'goals for' column.

Popular Ho Chi Minh City club Cang Saigon were the most impressive in the first round and completed their ten outings without loss. However, rumours of match fixing were rife and, many supporters thoughts became fact when Oto Hai Hung lost their postponed match 5-0 to Phu Khanh, enabling the latter to qualify for the second round on goal difference from Group A.

Champions

Group B proved to be the most even with just two points separating the top eight teams. Eventual champions Dong Thap finished seventh on goal difference and just squeezed into the second round. Group winners Song Lam from Nghe Tinh province were given special exemption from the second round by the Football Association so that they could compete in the Indochinese Cup against clubs from Laos and Kampuchea.

Dong Thap were drawn into the easiest of the second round groups, but still struggled to qualify for the semi-finals ahead of Det Nam Dinh; succeeding again by goal difference.Cong An Hanoi, the defending champions, finished six points ahead of the field in Group One and Cau Lac Bo Quan Doi, the crack army club, finished top of Group Three. These three were joined in the semi-finals by Dien Haiphong.

Group Three had been reduced to six teams after the Quang Nam Da Nang team bus crashed on return from the fixture against Nghia Binh. Quang Nam Da Nang were left without nine of its regulars, were excused from the rest of the competition and given a place in the 1990 Supreme League.

In the semi-finals, Dong Thap battled through a scoreless 120 minutes with Dien Haiphong before qualifying for the final 4-3 from the penalty spot. Cau Lac Bo Quan Doi emerged as their opponents after edging out the champions, Cong An Hanoi by 1-0.

Three-times A1 champions Cau Lac Bo Quan Doi were hot favourites for the title. After all, Dong Thap are the team of Vietnam's poorest province and it was their first season in the top flight. But, the pundits were wrong and the underdogs snatched victory.

ASIA CONTINUED

FOR the second successive season, Jurong Town has been pipped by Geylang International in the Singapore Premier League title race. Last year, two points separated the two teams. This time goal difference was decisive.

Those figures – plus 26 as opposed to plus 13 – suggest Geylang to be worthy champions, but Jurong will be kicking themselves throughout the close season.

They went into the campaign's final game, home to lowly Safsa, needing just a draw to gain the crown. The reason for their failure was easy to define, if difficult to pronounce – Easawaramoorthy Pillai.

He is the Singaporean national squad's third-string goalkeeper and he was incredible for ninety minutes, he defied everything Jurong threw at him, which was considerable. At least seven of his saves were world class. Then, just before half time, he set into motion the counter attack which ended with Ang Boon Chin scoring the winner for a side which finished third from bottom of the table.

THAILAND: The Thais shrugged off their woeful World Cup of last year, to retain the King's Cup with a 2-1 win over Rotor Volgograd in the final at Bangkok.

The Soviet first division side took the lead after three minutes through captain Alexander Nikitin and held it for almost an hour until Prateep Parkhao equalised.

Although the hosts attacked constantly for the remainder of regular time, they had to wait until the 18th minute of extra time for the winner. The ever-alert Parkhao got his foot to the ball during a goalmouth scramble.

Shoot-out

The third place play off between South Korean club Yukong and China finished 1-1 after extra time and Yukong won the shoot-out 6-5.

KUALA LUMPUR: League champions City Hall emulated the capital city's representative side holders of the Malaysia Cup by capturing the FA of Malaysia Cup – which is contested by top clubs throughout the nation.

Despite conceding home advantage to Kelantan's PKINK in the final, last year's runners-up always held the initiative even if they had to wait until the 78th minute before substitute Yap Wai Loon snatched the only goal.

BURMA BACK IN THE MAINSTREAM

THE return of Burma to international football brings back memories of how that beautiful country was once the leading power in the region.

The Burma Football Federation was founded in 1947 and joined FIFA the same year. The presence of many British companies and army units gave the sport a sound base and with a booming economy and an efficient network of communications soccer made rapid progress.

The Aung Sam Memorial Stadium in Rangoon could house 45,000 and at the time was one of the most modern stadiums in Asia.

In 1960 control of football in Burma switched to the Union of Burma Amateur Football Federation who governed over some 37 district associations.

Now came first indications of international success to come. The Burma youth team were Asian champions three times between 1961 and 1964 and the decade from 1965 onwards was a golden one for Burmese football.

That year they won their first SEAP Games championship, a title they were to retain for a record five consecutive tournaments in avictorious spell that lasted until 1973. In 1966 they took the soccer title at the multi-sport Asian Games and four years later were joint champions with the Korean Republic after the final ended without goals.

They were also, at various times, champions of the Jakarta Anniversary Tournament (consecutive winners from 1973-1976) and the Merdeka tournament.

Surprisingly the region's other major trophy, the Asian Soccer Championship, eluded Burma, although they were runners up in 1968 to a formidable Iran team playing on home soil.

Bert Trautmann, the German goalkeeper of Manchester City of FA Cup fame, spent a spell in Burma as technical adviser and their greatest achievement was perhaps in qualifying for the 1972 Olympics. In Munich they suffered narrow one goal defeats to the Soviet Union and Mexico and defeated Sudan.

At home political and financial problems were rising to the surface and youth football, which had always been the base of the nation's success, was already being neglected. When in 1970 the youth side defected Indonesia 3-0 for the Asian title it was their fifth victory and their sixth final in seven years. It was also the last Burmese success to date.

With the government electing for an increasing isolation the economy was soon in serious trouble and football suffered along with every other aspect of life.

Happily 1985 saw the first signs of Burma returning to international events. The country was represented in several sports at the South East Asian Games although the soccer team, having entered, withdrew at short notice.

However at the end of the year Indonesia were invited to play an international in Rangoon with the local side winning 2-1. Since then the national team have returned to regional tournaments and have come across the border to play matches with Thailand. However the momentum which at one time seemed certain to take Burma all the way to the World Cup has been lost.

Today the national team play with enthusiasm but lack technique, experience and stamina. Burma players are, however, as skilful as ever and, partly because they are available at bargain prices, several are expected to find their way into the Malaysian and other semi-professional leagues.

Events proved even more turbulent across the border in Cambodia. Twenty years ago amateur football was alive and well in the country. The nation's ruler, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, was a fan and patron of the game and 100,000 crowds would watch the national team play important games in the national stadium where the pitch was laid on soil specially imported from Japan.

Nightmare

War, and a horrific massacre that costs thousands of lives, turned the country into a living nightmare. With people fearing for their lives it was presumed that no football was being played at all. However in 1984 the national team made a surprise visit to Vietnam for the SKDA tournament. There they lost 8-1 to Vietnam and 3-1 to Cuba. Shortly afterwards FIFA President Havelange made a short visit to the country and, with events settling, some news of Cambodian football started to reach the outside world.

Today fighting continues in some rural areas and the country is virtually bankrupt. As a result even the best teams, such as Commerce Ministry, cannot find a full size pitch to train on. Top sides play in torn and much repaired kit, and often attend practices with just a single football.

Despite all these handicaps the sport survives. The national title is now in its ninth year with eight clubs competing, and this year's final brought a 35,000 crowd – the biggest attendance since the glory days of the 1960s. Commerce beat Svay Rieng Province 1-0 to take their eighth league title.

Minnows who are on top of the World

THE world's only real top-level championship? That could be the claim in Khatmandu, in Nepal in the Himalayas.

The Nepalese are great football enthusiasts (King Birendra Shah was a player of some class), and when the national side plays all 30,000 places in the stadium of Khatmandu rapidly fill up.

Tickets in Everest's shadow cost from three to 20 Nepalese rupees (about seven to 45 pence) and there are many who like to enter, with tickets or not. Tragedy struck three years ago: 70 people died in the crush at the gates during a thunderstorm.

Football was imported into Nepal in 1921 by some students who had been in India and watched matches between English soldiers and civilians. But 15 years passed before football emerged from the royal palace and became the sport of the people. In 1936 the first tournament was organised by General Rana, the prioree of Nepalese football.

In 1947 it was King Tribhuvan, who organised a competition on a direct knock-out formula, the Tribhuvan Shield.

In 1951 the Nepalese opened their borders and football was organised on a national basis with the creation of the Nepal Football Association (NFA). The team from Jaleswar, in the south of the country – Terai, a tropical region – won the first truly national competition, the Cup or Tribhuvan Shield. This, along with the national championship or Nara Trophy, is the most important tournament in Nepalese football.

The organisation of the national championship deserves separate mention. This is based on the 12 regional leagues, leading to a second phase, the Super League, for the top teams.

The regional champions then fight out the final in Khatmandu for the championship of Nepal.

What is really strange is that "fixed" matches are also permitted! When there is a clash between two teams with no worries or championship hopes, prior agreement is reached for the result of the game. The referee is informed of this and acts accordingly, whistling only at the beginning and end of the match! Sometimes the final whistle is sounded 10-15 minutes early, provoking the anger of the public and the players.

The organisation of the championship suffers from the impossibility of rapid communications within the country (the 125 mile trip between Khatmandu and Fokhara takes nine hours) and the limited means of ANFA (All Nepal Football Association), the Federation which replaced the defunct NFA.

The modest financial situation also limits the growth of the national side, which took part in the qualifying stages fo the 1986 and 1990 World Cups, only to be knocked out by South Korea in the competition that included also Singapore and Malaysia – no goals for and 30 against.

Among today's stars is the captain, Ganesh Thapa, a left winger who plays in Bangladesh (another football-mad country), and the long-haired libero Raju Shakya, lover of Argentinian football with a past in Bangladesh.

The best players earn up to 1500 rupees a month (about £35) plus the popularity that reached its height in 1984 when the national team won the championship of the Indian sub-continent (in which India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, the Maldives, Bhutan and Sri Lanka also took part) in front of a delirious local crowd.

DIARY

World Soccer's global news service conducted by Keir Radnedge

TUESDAY, JUNE 19

WORLD CUP: Baggio and Schillaci are heroes of Italy after scoring both goals in the 2-0 win over Czechoslovakia; Austria beat the United States 2-1 in a rugged old match in Florence; West Germany draw 1-1 with Colombia and Yugoslavia finish second in Group D thanks to their easy 4-1 demolition of the UAE ... one-match suspensions were confirmed for Rumania's Marius Lacatus and Argentina's Jose Serrizuela, meaning they would both miss their team's second-round tie. There was no suspension for the Soviet Union's Oleg Protasov despite his two yellow cards because of his team's elimination.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20

WORLD CUP: Brazil copy Italy, beating Scotland 1-0 to maintain a three-match 100 per cent record; Costa Rica shock Sweden by hitting back from 1-0 down to win 2-1 and qualify for the second round as group runners-up ... Rumania's Gheorghe Popescu denies reports that he will transfer to Koln ... Colombia coach Francisco Maturana denies that Valderrama and Rincon were play-acting against West Germany. He says: "Our players are not as strong as the Germans. They really do feel more pain."

THURSDAY, JUNE 21

WORLD CUP: Uruguay squeeze into the second round by the tightest margin, beating South Korea 1-0 with a goal half a minute before the end of injury time; but Spain top Group E after beating Belgium 2-1; in Group F, the drama runs right to the end of the first round with England beating Egypt 1-0 and Holland and the Irish Republic drawing 1-1. Back in Rome FIFA general secretary Sepp Blatter oversees the draw which places the Irish second in the group and the Dutch third - thus sending them to Milan to face West Germany in the second round.

AUSTRIA: The national squad, the last results having destroyed faint hopes of the luck of the draw, pack their bags with skipper Polsyer blaming manager Hickersberger for "making a mess of our World Cup preparation."

ITALY: Raniero Pontello, having sold Baggio to Juventus, now sells his controlling shares in denuded Fiorentina to film-maker Mario Cecchi Gori.

FRIDAY, JUNE 22

WORLD CUP: Travelling day as the non-group winners start moving on to new training centres and the luckless eight first-round failures set off for home ... FIFA president Joao Havelange, in a Rome press conference, praises the World Cup referees as "the best in the world." He says: "What counts are not the media reports but the marks of our assessors. So far the average mark is 8.5. I would have been happy with such a mark as a student." Havelange says he will have proposals for December's executive committee to extend third world presence at the finals and "modify the first round qualifying system. A draw can never be ideal."

SATURDAY, JUNE 23

WORLD CUP: The beginning of the end, with the start of the second round. Cameroon beat Colombia 2-1 after extra time in Naples with two more goals from Roger Milla then Skuhravy scores a hat-trick in Czechoslovakia's 4-1 defeat of Costa Rica.

SUNDAY, JUNE 24

WORLD CUP: Two major contests in one day: Argentina beat Brazil 1-0 and West Germany score a thrilling 2-1 victory over Holland in Milan in a match which produces an Italian receipts record of (pounds) £2.95million ... FIFS press chief Guido Tognoni denies reports that the world body is considering England's exclusion from the next World Cup because of inordinately high levels of security necessary to try to restrict hooliganism.

MONDAY, JUNE 25

WORLD CUP: Italy reach the quarter-finals by defeating Uruguay 2-0 in Rome; in the first penalty decider of the finals the Irish Republic beat Romania 5-4 after a goalless draw in their second round clash in Genoa ... West Germany formally protest to FIFA about Sunday's expulsion of Voller and yellow card for Matthaus ... FIFA and Coca-Cola announce the extension of their joint sponsorship arrangements until the year 2000. Principally this means the World Youth Cup, the next edition of which will take place in Portugal ... police in Bologna send home 19 English hooligans accused of causing trouble in Modena.

David Platt.

TUESDAY, JUNE 26

WORLD CUP: Yugoslavia reach the quarter-finals thanks to a 2-1 extra time win over Spain in Verona; England go to the last minute of extra time before a David Platt goal provides a dramatic 1-0 win over Belgium in Bologna ... on the hooligan front, 239 England fans are deported by police after trouble in Rimini ... FIFA president Joao Havelange says Africa will probably have three teams in the 1994 finals.'

BELGIUM: The Brussels Court of Appeal increases to five years' the jail sentence judgments against 11 of the 14 Liverpool fans found guilty following the 1985 Heysel disaster.

COLOMBIA: Francisco Maturana resigns as national team manager.

ITALY: Lecce claim to have secured the transfer of Brazil reserve fullback Mazinho.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 27

WORLD CUP: Helmut Kohl, the linesman who wrongly flagged John Barnes offside when he 'scored' for England against Belgium, is named to referee the quarter-final between West Germany and Czechoslovakia ... West German skipper Lothar Matthaus agrees a new three-year deal with Inter. The club had offered only a one-year contract extension before the World Cup finals ... Argentine officials deny claims by Brazil fullback Branco that he was drugged when he drank from one of their water bottles during Brazil's second- round defeat in Turin ... FIFA ban Frank Rijkaard for three games and Rudi Voller for one.

GREECE: The Sports Ministry prepares a new law which would separate the soccer authority from the state, and allow it to fall in line with FIFA demands.

ITALY: Fiorentina open talks to sign Belgium midfield hero Enzo Scifo, who is playing for Auxerre in France but is still basically an Inter player.

THURSDAY, JUNE 28

WORLD CUP: No action on the pitch but a significant day in the committee rooms, with the International Board meeting. The board (comprising one member from each of the UK associations and four representatives of FIFA) decide to change the offside rule from July 25. Now the play in line with the penultimate defender will NOT be offside. The Board, considering interpretations, decides that the 'professional' foul on a forward heading clear for goal should be punished by expulsion. If the incident occurs in the penalty it must be punished by both a penalty and an expulsion. The Board also sets up a study on effective playing time.

HOLLAND: PSV Eindhoven are apparently close to resolving the transfer of Denmark striker Flemming Povlsen to Italy's Bologna.

PORTUGAL: Benfica agree terms to sell Brazil defender Aldair to Roma for £3million.

SOVIET UNION: Kiev sources hint that agreement may be close for the transfer of Alexei Mikhailichenko to Sampdoria.

FRIDAY, JUNE 29

BRAZIL: Zico, now the Minister for Sport, suggests that the national team should in future ignore foreign-based players.

FRANCE: The Saint-Etienne tax evasion vrial in Lyon ends at last. National manager Michel Platini receives a suspended four-month prison sentence plus a £65,000 fine. Former president Roger Rocher, found to have created a £1.5million slush fund, is jailed for four years with 30 months suspended as already served. Former coach Robert Herbin is given a suspended six-month sentence with a £15,000 fine; Christian Lopez 15 months' suspended; the other nine players each four months' suspended plus varying fines down to £1,000 for former winger Zimako.

ITALY: The state broadcasting chain, RAI, reach agreement with Milan president Silvio Berlusconi's Fininvest group over coverage of the coming season's European club matches.

SWITZERLAND: UEFA inflicts suspensions of two games on Bruno and one game each on Dell'Oglio, Nappi, Buso, Di Chiara and Aleinikov in a delayed disciplinary aftermatch of the UEFA Cup Final between Juventus and Fiorentina. Both clubs are fined £7,000 for firework throwing by fans and Fiorentina are fined an additional £1,300 for 'unsporting behaviour' ... Hans Bangerter, former general secretary of UEFA, criticises the decision of the Brussels Court of Appeal inflicting a suspended three-month prison sentence on hmm for responsibility in the Heysel stadium disaster. Bangerter, who was involved in inspecting the stadium in February of 1985, says: "That is like a sword of Damocles hanging over the organisers of every sporting event for incidents over which they have no control."

Voller gets the red card against Holland.

SATURDAY, JUNE 30

WORLD CUP: Italy beat the Irish Republic 1-0 in Rome to earn a semi-final duel with Argentina, who scrape through 3-2 on penalties after a goalless draw against Yugoslavia in Florence.

ITALY: Fiorentina's new president, Mario Cecchi Gori, turns down one last Juventus bid for Brazil midfielder Dunga.

ROMANIA: World Cup defender Gheorghe Popescu agrees personal terms for a transfer to Italian club Lecce but still awaits agreement from the federation.

SUNDAY, JULY 1

WORLD CUP: The most thrilling of the quarter-finals sees England battle through another extra-time drama before beating Cameroon 3-2; in the semi-finals they will face West Germany, who beat Czechoslovakia 1-0 ... Maradooa lands in yet another controversy when he appeals for the people of Naples "to forget they are Italian for one day." Argentina manager Carlos Bilardo says Dezotti (a forward) will replace Calderon (a midfielder) in the line-up against Italy ... tragedy on the autostrade with the death in a crash of the Bournemouth general manager Brian Tiler ... two England followers are deported after trouble in Sorrento.

MONDAY, JULY 2

WORLD CUP: Europe beat America (including Australian Craig Johnston) 10-7 in a fund-raising game for the United Nations' third world food and agriculture programme. Players include Vidinic, Castellini, Sala, Agroppi, Rummenigge, Boniek, Causio, Brady, Paolo Rossi, Bobby Charlton, Altobelli and Hansi Muller for Europe as well as Junior, Falcao, Dirceu, Rivelino, Cubillas, Zico, Altafini and Johnston for America. Rossi and Zico both score hat-tricks ... Italy manaer Vicini refuses to name his side to face Argentina until 90 minutes before the kick-off ... one of West Germany's assistants blames their below-par display against Czechoslovakia on menu problems – "too much meat and not enough pasta."

ITALY: Real Mat6i' midvielder Rafael Martin Vazquez arrives in Turin to formally sign for Torino.

CONTINUED OVER

DIARY

World Soccer's global news service conducted by Keir Radnedge

TUESDAY, JULY 3

WORLD CUP: Argentina, amazingly, beat Italy in Naples, winning 4-3 on penalties after a 1-1 draw. Goycochea, with two decisive penalty saves, is the hero again.

BELGIUM: The lawyer representing Liverpool fans whose sentences were increased by the Brussels Court of Appeal says that they will appeal.

FRANCE: Enzo Francescoli agrees terms to sign for Italian club Cagliari but the sale details have yet to be esolved with Marseille.

ITALY: Champions Napoli sign forward Giuseppe Incocciati from Pisa.

SWITZERLAND: Young Boys sell Colombia World Cup defender Andres Escobar to Italy's Parma.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 4

WORLD CUP: More semi-final penalty drama: this time England are the losers against West Germany, losing 4-3 in the shoot-out after a 1-1 extra time draw ... the Italian inquest starts with everyone trying to blame everyone else but, above all, coach Vicini. Vialli says: "Don't blame me for the way I played, ask Vicini about it." ... FIFA's referees committee formally criticises Vauvrot for allowing the first half of extra time in the Italy v Argentina to run on as it did.

ITALY: The federation announces that Giancarlo De Sisti, Vicini's spy on opponents, will become his official deputy next season. Current deputy Sergio Brighenti will concentrate on the second division league team.

JAPAN: The PJM corporation is reported from Tokyo to be ready to offer Maradona a 'blank contract' to play for their team being set up to join the planned inaugural professional championship in 1992.

MOROCCO: The federation say they will bid to stage the 1998 World Cup finals. France are favourites.

THURSDAY, JULY 5

WORLD CUP: Diego Maradona back at the centre of controversy, this time after a free-for-all which followed an attempt he and his family made to drive out of the Argentina training camp at Trigoria. A policeman and a security man both need hospital treatment. In Florence the wife of former Argentine star Daniel Bertoni is admitted to hospital with facial injuries after a row between Bertoni and one of his former advisers ... FIFA's referees committee formally censures Vautrot for allowing the first half of extra time in Italy v Argentina to run on as well as putting away his yellow card when Giusti would have been sent off (before his 'real' expulsion). The committee surprisingly named Codesal Mendez, the Uruguayan-born Mexican, to referee the Final between West Germany and Argentina. Frenchman Joel Quiniou, who publicly fell out with Brazilian Jose Roberto Wright in the Germany v England tie, pays the price by being allocated 'only' the Third Place Play-off.

ENGLAND: Graham Taylor will, apparently, be confirmed next week as new England manager and begin his reign with a September friendly against Hungary.

ITALY: Soviet star Alexei Mikhailichenko arrives in Genoa to sign for Sampdoria.

FRIDAY, JULY 6

WORLD CUP: Maradona hits back: complaining that someone rixpedpdown the Argentine flag at their Trigoria training camp. Maradona blames someone from Roma (the club who own the camp) and says: "I've told Bilardo we were wrong to come here." Roma officials have apparently started making snap visits after reports that the Argentine party were taking the camp apart. In a separate incident the Argentines complain that Goycochea's wife was threatened by a policeman outside a Rome hotel ... Italy coach Vicini drops Ferri, De Napoli, Donadoni and Vialli for the Third Place Play-off ... UNICEF announces that shirts from the four semi-finalists and autographed match balls will be auctioned later this year to raise money for third world medical aid ... the United States World Cup 94 organisers stage a press conference in Rome, fronted by vice-chairman Henry Kissinger. He says, among other things: "The United States will not be humiliated. If we cannot do something we will say so."

CAMEROON: The World Cup players are presented with formal state honours by President Paul Biya.

ITALY: After weeks of denials Fiorentina confirm the return of Stefano Borgonovo from Milan ... Juventus, who took the unusual step of advertising season ticket sales for the new Delle Alpi stadium in the daily newspapers, say they have taken £4million in two weeks (half the Baggio fee).

SWITZERLAND: Now the Swiss restate their intention of bidding for the 1998 World Cup. France remain favourites ... FIFA announce that a record 126 countries have entered the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games football qualifying tournament.

SUNDAY, JULY 8

WORLD CUP: West Germany win the Cup for the third time, beating Argentina 1-0 thanks to a controversial late penalty converted by Andy Brehme. Mexican referee Edgardo Codesal Mendez becomes the first official to send off anyone in the Final, dismissing Argentina's Pedro Monzon and Gustavo Dezotti. Back in West Germany more than 100 people were injured and four killed in fighting which sprang from the mob hysteria generated by the national team's success.

MONDAY, JULY 9

ARGENTINA: The World Cup runners-up receive an ecstatic welcome home from thousands of fans – whose presence means the 20-mile trip from Ezeiza airport to the Casa Rosada in central Buenos Aires takes 5 hours. Federation president Julio Grondona says he will not try to change the mind of national manager Bilardo over his intention to resign. Favourite to take over is River Plate coach Daniel Passarella, the 1978 World Cup-winning captain. Cesar Menotti, the 1978 Cup-winning manager, says Argentina would have played better in Italy with ten home-based players plus Maradona, rather than all the exiles. Maradona blames "a football mafia" for Argentina's defeat and says that he refused to shake the hand of FIFA president Joao Havelange in protest at the medals presentation "because he took away something I had won (the World Cup)."

BRAZIL: Emerson Leao, former World Cup goalkeeper, is favourite to succeed Sebastiao Lazaroni as manager of Brazil.

OBITUARY

OLDRICH NEJEDLY: One of the greatest European players of the 1930s died in Prague aged 81 during the World Cup finals. Nejedly was born on May 25, 1909 in Rakovnik, near Prague. He started to play football in the 1920s for the local Zebrak team in the Czech second division and scored so prolifically that Sparta Praha, one of the greatest clubs in Central Europe during the inter-war years, paid 200,000 crowns to sign him. Coach Haftl did not rate Nejedly but when he eventually put him into the team Nejedly marked his debut by scoring five goals. The Sily-Braine-Nejedly inside forward trio helped Sparta dominate Czechoslovak soccer (along with neighbours Slavia) in the 1930s and he was a major star in the Mitropa Cup (precursor of the present European club tournaments). Nejedly formed a famous left-wing partnership with outside left Antonin Puc and both were members of the Czechoslovak squad which finished runners-up to Italy in the 1934 World Cup Final. Nejedly scored 391 goals in 421 games for Sparta, won championship medals in 1932, 1936, 1938 and 1939 and won the Mitropa Cup in 1935. He was the league's top scorer on one occasion, with 21 goals in 1938-39. He scored 28 goals in 43 internationals for his country.

JOAO SALDANHA: The former Botafogo and Brazil coach died in Rome aged 73 on July 13 after being taken ill with heart trouble during the last week of the World Cup finals. Saldanha had been on a life-support machine. He was one of Brazil's most famous sports (and occasional political) commentators and was a former professional player and manager. In the 1930s he played for the Rio dclub Botafogo, came to Europe to study journalism then returned to Brazil to rtake up coaching as well. He led Botafogo to the Rio state title in 1957 but returned to journalism in 1959. During his spell in charge of Botafogo he was involved in a long-running disciplinary war of wits with great right winger Garrincha. A string of the funniest anecdotes were later made famous through Os Subterraneos de Futebol, one of Saldanha's most popular soccer books. In 1969 Saldanha was surprisingly summoned to manage Brazil for the World Cup qualifiers. Brazil won all six matches but in the spring of 1970 Saldanha was replaced as manager by Mario Zagalo. It was suggested that this was because Saldanha had dared to suggest dropping Pele but the reasons were more probably political. Saldanha returned to journalism and remained one of the most realistic and sought-after commentators on Brazilian football. He never lost his eye for a footballer and it was Saldanha who was the first to appreciate the potential of Socrates (the footballer).

MIGUEL MUNOZ (Mozun): One of the greatest figures of Real Madrid's Golden Era in the 1950s and 1960s, died in Madrid aged 68. Munoz, captain and then coach of Real Madrid's European Champions' Cup-winning teams, was born in Madrid, the eldest of three children. The Spanish civil war cut across his teenage years but in 1939, at 17, he began his playing career with minor clubs Imperio, Girod, Imperio again and then Logrones. He was an inside right who was, in 1944, signed by Santander (later the first club of Gento and then Santillana). Two years later he joined Celta de Vigo having been converted into an old-fashioned centre-half and then right half. In 1948 he joined Real Madrid for the last ten years of his playing career. That Moz played only eight times for Spain was largely due to the fac that Spain's international football was very restricted in the early 1950s. He was never sent off and captained Madrid for years – and, in particular, to the first-ever Champions' Cup final triumph, over Reims in Paris in 1956. He was also the scorer, against Servette in Geneva in autumn of 1955, of Real's first goal in European competition, and was winning captain again in the 1957 final against Fiorentina in Madrid's own stadium. In 1958 he retired, was granted a testimonial match against Pele's Santos, and was handed the job of coach to Plus Ultra (now Castilla), Real's affiliated second division club. In the spring of 1960 Real, under pressure from their own players, sacked Paraguayan coach Fleitas Solich on the eve of the Champions' Cup semi-final against Barcelona. Moz was promoted as caretaker guided Madrid to victories home an away over Barsa and then to the unforgettable 7-3 thrashing of West Germany's Eintracht Frankfurt in the final in Hampden. Moz stayed for a further 10 years, winning nine leagues, two cup and the Champions' Cup in 1966. After stepping down in the early 1970s, he had two brief spells as national manager before taking charge, in turn, at Hercules (Alicante), Sevilla and Las Palmas. In the summer of 1982, after Spain's dismal showing as World Cup hosts, Moz was appointed national manager in succession to his one-time Madrid pupil, Jose Santamaria. His arrival brought instant results, with Spain finishing as runners-up in the 1984 European championship and then reaching the World Cup quarter-finals in Mexico. Munoz had hoped to stay on through to Italia '90 but Spain's disappointing first phase elimination in the finals of the 1988 European championship put an end to that and he was succeeded as boss by former aide Luis Suarez.

Miguel Munoz.

Above: Brehme's penalty wins the World Cup for West Germany. Below: Maradona refused to shake hands with officials in protest after their defeat.

ENGLAND: Prime Minister Mrs Thatcher backs a recommendation from Sports Minister Colin Moynihan that English clubs should return forthwith to European competition.

FRANCE: Bordeaux release Stephane Paille on loan for a year to FC Porto and buy Holland striker Wim Kieft from PSV Eindhoven.

ITALY: Luigi Agnolin, Italy's top referee and one of the best in the world never mind Europe, announces his retirement. Agnolin is still only 47, two years short of mandatory retirement. But he ws upset at being singled out for controversial criticism during the World Cup by FIFA general secretary Sepp Blatter.

PORTUGAL: Champions FC Porto sign France international Stephane Paille on loan from Bordeaux for one year.

SWITZERLAND: UEFA general secretary Gerd Aigner says he wants to see "World Cup-style" refereeing in the European club tournaments.

WEST GERMANY: The triumphant World Cup-winning side are welcomed home to Frankfurt by crowds of thousands. A crowd of 20,000 brings all traffic to a halt in the centre of the city ... Borussia Dortmund buy Denmark striker Flemming Povlsen from PSV Eindhoven.

TUESDAY, JULY 10

EAST GERMANY: The federation formally announces it will probably withdraw from the 1992 European championship qualifiers because of the pace of unification talks with West Germany.

ITALY: The FIGC announce that Azeglio Vicini will remain as national manager until at least 1992. Federation president Antonio Matarrese also warns Diego Maradona that, on his return to Italy for the new season, he must cease his verbal attacks on soccer officialdom. Matarrese says: "So far his behaviour has been tolerated. He must know we will not accept such behaviour in future." ... in the meantime, Naples city officials are discussing appointing Maradona an honorary citizen ... a jubilant fan is found to have stolen the centre spot of the Olympic stadium pitch in Rome – one of the most valuable chunks of turf due for sale as World Cup Final souvenirs.

MEXICO: World Cup Final referee Edgardo Codesal Mendez says he has watched the incident time and again on television and remains convinced he was right to award the decisive penalty for a foul by Sensini on Voller. Codesal says he has now retired from refereeing.

SWITZERLAND: FIFA general secretary Sepp Blatter says referee and linesmen should be split into different categories and only professional officials should be employed at the 1998 World Cup finals. Blatter also says all top referees must be able to speak English for simplication of communication. Blatter admits he had underestimated the refereeing problem which would arise at Italia '90 and said radical changes were also needed regarding the referee assessors system because "the assessors' entourage is made up of old men, themselves ex-referees, who are psychologically inclined to tolerate errors." ... UEFA lift the ban on English clubs participating in European competitions following positive representations from the British government. But Liverpool's extra three-year ban remains in place.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 11

ARGENTINA: Jose Francisco Sanfilippo sues Maradona for libel over comments made by Maradona in a dispute over whether he or Pele had been the greater player. Sanfilippo had nominated Pele and was accused by Maradona of "being anti-Argentine and a traitor." Guillermo Coppola, Maradona's agent, says the player will return to Italy in August "as meek as a lamb."

FRANCE: French financial institutions insist they still have no clear idea how Marseille's multi-millionaire president Bernard Tapie has arranged the puechase of West German sportswear giant, Adidas.

HOLLAND: Ajax are fined guilty of £1.8million tax evasion in transfer dealings and are fined £350,000. Former president Ton Harmsen and former treasurer Lou Bartels are fined £50,000 and £25,000 respectively and Harmsen is also handed a suspended six-month jail sentence. Also found guilty is current Ajax managing director, Arie Van Eijden who is fined £30,000 and handed a four-month suspended jail sentence. Acquitted, for lack of evidence, is former Denmark star Soren Lerby.

ITALY: Milan challenge West Germany to a challenge match.

SWITZERLAND: The draw is made for the first round of the three European club competitions. European champions Milan begin with a bye.

UNITED STATES: One of the possible 1994 World Cup Final venues features at the centre of a management dispute as Mike Robbie is fired as executive vice-president of Joe Robbie Stadium in Miami by the sister and two brothers who serve as trustees of their father's estate.

THURSDAY, JULY 12

AUSTRIA: Ferenc Puskas says Italia '90 was the poorest World Cup he could remember with some of the poorest of referees ... Rapid Vienna say they have no stadium big enough to stage their UEFA Cup tie against Internazionale because their own Hanappi stadium is undergoing redevelopment and the Prater stadium will be in preparation for Davis Cup tennis.

ITALY: Sampdoria, after weeks of contractual and medical uncertainty, finally agree to buy Alexei Mikhailichenko from Kiev.

UNITED STATES: World Cup '94 officials deny West German reports that the finals may be switched to West Germany if the Americans hit further problems over television coverate.

WEST GERMANY: Kaiserslautern sign Czechoslovak World Cup defender Miroslav Kadlec from Vitkovice ... West German officials call for increased speed in unification arrangements with the East "otherwise East German soccer will bleed to death as all the young talent comes over to the West."

UNITED STATES: TV surveys show that only one per cent of Americans watched coverage of the World Cup Final. But that represents 1,066,000 households, a one-match record, and the screening was only available on the Turn cable system.

WEST GERMANY: A DFB meeting in Frankfurt invites the top two East German league clubs into the Bundesliga next season – accelerating from two to one year the speed of soccer unification. Six East German clubs will be admitted to the West German second division. The DFB also formally invites the East Germans to withdraw from the European championship and Olympic Games qualifiers.

Ivica Osim staying on.

YUGOSLAVIA: Ivica Osim is confirmed as national manager for four more years.

ZIMBABWE: FA officials accuse Zambia of cheating on players' ages in an under-17 match. Zambia had beaten Zimbabwe 2-0 in the Zimbabwe capital of Harare.

FRIDAY, JULY 13

BELGIUM: Promoted RWD Molenbeek buy Hungary international Emil Lorincz.

BRAZIL: National football director Jorge Salgado lays down the short job expectation for a Brazil manager. He says: "The media here analyse only results. If you win you're a king, if you lose you're a villain. I don't believe any coach could withstand the pressure of our media for four years. Under Bilardo Argentina went 11 games without scoring yet he was still in charge at the World Cup. In Brazil that would have been impossible."

GREECE: Olympiakos, whose coach is now Oleg Blokhinm, claim to have signed Soviet stars Oleg Protasov of Kiev and Valeri Shmarov of Moscow Spartak.

SATURDAY, JULY 14

UNITED STATES: Lothar Osiander, former national team boss and now Olympic Games coach, says it could take 50 years for the US to become a world soccer power.

SUNDAY, JULY 15

BRAZIL: Midfielder Neto, controversially omitted from the World Cup squad, defies pain from a damaged ankle to score the first goal as Corinthians beat Santos 3-1 to extend their Paulista championship lead and stretch their unbeaten run to 27 games ... World Cup defender Mauro Galvao is sold by Botafogo to Swiss club Lugano ... old star Zico, now Sports Minister, suggests that the national team should, in future, be made up of only home-based players.

ENGLAND: Graham Taylor is officially confirmed as new England manager.

Gheorghe Hagi joins Real Madrid.

ROMANIA: World Cup star Gheorghe Hagi marries girlfriend Elena at the Romanian Orthodox Cathedral in their home town of Constanta and then throws a party for 1,000 guests. Hagi will, later in the week, fly to Spain to begin training with his new club, Real Madrid.

MONDAY, JULY 16

BELGIUM: Anderlecht sell Denmark's Henrik Andersen to Koln and World Cup midfielder Patrick Vervoort to Bordeaux.

GREECE: Olympiakos reluctantly agree to sell Hungary star Lajos Detari to Bologna for £3million. That represents a loss of £1.7million on the deal for Olympiakos, who bought Detari from Eintracht Frankfurt two years ago. But they need the money to fund a team rebuilding programme.

ITALY: Bologna buy Detari from Olympiakos ... promoted Parma sign Sweden striker Tomas Brolin from Norrkoping and Brazil goalkeeper Claudio Taffarel from Internacional. Lecce buy Vasco da Gama fullback Mazinho.

SPAIN: Second division Malaga buy Cameroon World Cup star Cyrille Makanaky from relegated French side Toulon.

SWITZERLAND: UEFA uphold club bans of five matches on Romanian striker Flrin Raducioiu and four matches on Dinano Bucharest team-mate Michael Klein.

CONTINUED OVER

DIARY

World Soccer's global news service conducted by Keir Radnedge

CONTINUED

TUESDAY, JULY 17

CAMEROON: World Cup hero Roger Milla says he intends never to play in Franfe again because "all through my career they have exploited me." Milla intends to play now in Los Angeles.

FRANCE: Aime Jacquet, formerly boss of Bordeaux and Montpellier, is surprisingly appointed coach to Nancy just five days before the start of the new season.

GREECE: Now Olympiakos also claim to have agreed the purchase of another Soviet World Cup forward, Igor Dobrovolski, as well as Torpedo's midfielder, Yuri Savichev.

SWEDEN: Olle Nordin's contract as national manager is not renewed after the World Cup flop. Youth coach Nisse Andersson takes over as caretaker until a new appointment is made before the August 18 friendly against Norway in Stavanger.

Predrag Spasic moves on.

YUGOSLAVIA: Partizan Belgrade sell World Cup defender Predrag Spasic to Real Madrid. He had been linked with another Spanish club, Oviedo. The deal ends speculation about Madrid interest in Nottingham Forest's Des Walker.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 18

ACTION: New Zealand draw 1-1 with touring Soviet side Lokomotiv Moscow in Auckland.

BRAZIL: Plans are announced to bid for the 1998 World Cup finals and the 2000 Olympic games (for Brasilia).

ITALY: Napoli buy Corinthians' star Ezidio Neto for £1.3million. The deal is negotiated by Diego Maradona's agent, Guillermo Coppola, and Neto is seen as long-term replacement for Maradona. He is expected to be loaned out to another Italian club in the meantime because Napoli have their quota of imports.

ROMANIA: Dinamo Bucharest name Gheorghe Multescu as new coach to succeed Pisa-bound Mircea Lucescu.

SOVIET UNION: Anatoly Bishovets is appointed new national manager in succession to Valeri Lobanobsky. Bishovets, who guided the Soviets to Olympic gold in Seoul in 1988, says he will quit as Moscow Dynamo coach to concentrate fulltime on the national side. He began his career with Kiev and played in the 1970 World Cup finals.

THURSDAY, JULY 19

AUSTRIA: Alfred Riedl quits as Wiener Sportclub coach just over a week before the start of the championship. Assistant Ferry Janotka is appointed in his place.

BELGIUM: Nine people are arrested and charged with theft and receiving stolen goods after a break-in at a Brussels sportswear shop owned by former Belgian international star Frankie Vercauteren.

COSTA RICA: Luis Conejo, Costa Rica's goalkeeping hero of the World Cup, transfers from Cartagines to Spanish second division club Albacete. They sign him in preference to the Romanian keeper, Silviu Lung.

WEST GERMANY: Plans to unify the East and West German leagues are confirmed by a formal statement from the DFB in Frankfurt.

FRIDAY, JULY 20

EAST GERMANY: National boss Eduard Geyer says that the unification plans "will turn East Germany into one of football's poor relations."

GREECE: Olympiakos' transfer plans are thrown into confusion as the Soviet federation refuses permission for the transfers to the Greek club of Protasov and Dobrovolski.

WEST GERMANY: Bayer Leverkusen buy Romanian World Cup midfielder Ion Lupescu from Dinamo Bucharest.

SATURDAY, JULY 21

ACTION: New Zealand defeat touring Lokomotiv Moscow 2-1 in Wellington thanks to two first-half goals from Robert Ironside.

ENGLAND: Aston Villa spring a major surprise by naming Czechoslovak World Cup coach Josef Venglos as new manager in succession to England-bound Graham Taylor.

FRANCE: The new season opens with a narrow 1-0 victory for champions Marseille at home to Nice. Papin scores the goal. Chris Waddle is absent still on (permitted) holiday after the World Cup but Yugoslav newcomer Dragan Stojkovic makes his debut for his new club as a second-half substitute.

SUNDAY, JULY 22

BRAZIL: Palmeiras scrape a narrow 1-0 win over Portuguesa in the Sao Paulo championship – which means a victory for possible new national coach Emerson Leao over his one-time World Cup boss, Tele Santana. Leao was delighted with victory since Santana had previously criticised his managerial style as negative. In the Rio league, Vasco da Gama beat Flamengo 1-0 and qualify for the final against holders Botafogo. Bismarck scores the winner from a free kick.

Cyprus club APOP failed in their attempt to sign Cameroon World Cup star Roger Milla.

MONDAY, JULY 23

ENGLAND: Leeds take Israeli stars Shalom Tikva (Standard Liege) and Eli Ohana (Mechelen) on trial ... QPR sign Czechoslovak World Cup keeper Jan Stejskal ... England will play Cameroon at Wembley on February 6.

HOLLAND: PSV Eindhoven sign Romanian World Cup sweeper Gheorghe Popescu from Craiova.

SCOTLAND: Hungarian Istvan Kozma returns, after all, to rejoin Dunfermline.

UNITED STATES: Tab Ramos, Uruguay-born World Cup midfielder, agrees to join Spanish second division club Figueras.

WEST GERMANY: Bayern Munich's Hans Pflugler says he is quitting the national team "for at least two years" because he does not wish to be perpetual reserve to Andy Brehme ... Franz Beckenbauer denies any agreement with new Adidas owner Bernard Tapie although he concedes talks have taken place.

TUESDAY, JULY 24

AUSTRIA: Krems warn that they may go bust within the week because of debts totalling %1.2million after the loss of a major sponsor.

CYPRUS: APOP announce they are giving up attempts to sign Cameroon World Cup star Roger Milla.

MEXICO: Mexican soccer president Jesus Reynoso says they want to leave CONCACAF and becomes members of the South American confederation.

UNITED STATES: The Major Indoor Soccer League changes its name to the Major Soccer League after FIFA pressure which could see the start of moves to set up a formal national championship.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 25

ACTION: Atletico Nacional of Colombia, champions of South America, beat Mexico's UNAM 2-0 in Medellin in the first leg of the Inter-American Cup. Fajardo (72 minutes) and Galeano (75) score the goals ... New Zealand club side Napier City Rovers crash 5-0 to touring Lokomotiv Moscow.

FRANCE: Controversial Eric Cantona denies reports that he is to quit Marseille and join Cannes ... Luton's Denmark forward Lars Elstrup pulls out of a transfer to Brest.

SWITZERLAND: Champions Grasshoppers are surprisingly beaten 2-1 by promoted neighbours Zurich in the opening round of the new season.

UNITED STATES: Alan Rothenberg, commissioner for the soccer at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic, says he has been encouraged by FIFA officials to challenge Werner Fricker at the forthcoming USSF presidential elections.

URUGUAY: Penarol appoint Argentina's 1978 World Cup-winning manager Cesar Menotti as new coach in succession to Roberto Fleitas, who quit last week.

THURSDAY, JULY 26

PARAGUAY: The South American confederation announce that Chile, Colombia, Uruguay and Bolivia are rivals to host the 1991 South American championship. Chile are considered favourites.

SPAIN: Figueras, having signed US midfielder Tab Ramos for their second division campaign, now splash out on Cameroon's Louis Mfede from Canon Yaounde.

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CLUB FOCUS

VASCO'S £2M MEN AIM FOR TOKYO

From BRIAN HOMEWOOD in Rio De Janeiro

Bismarck (black strip) in attacking mood against Sao Paulo.

VASCO DA GAMA

Founded: 1898
Stadium: Sao Januario (capacity 35,000). Home games are played here or at the Maracana stadium (capacity 160,000).
President: Antonio Soares Calcada
Address: Vasco da Gama Clube de Regatas Rua General Almerio de Moura Sao Cristovao CEP 20921 Rio de Janeiro
Titles: Rio state championship in 1923, 1924, 1929, 1934, 1936, 1945, 1947, 1949, 1950, 1952, 1956, 1970, 1977, 1982, 1987, 1988. Brazilian national championship in 1974, 1989.
Strip: White shirts with black diagonal stripe, white shorts, white socks.
Second Strip: Black shirts with white diagonal stripe, black shorts, white socks.

VASCO DA GAMA, Brazil's "Portuguese" team, have assembled a team which they believe is capable of emulating rivals Flamengo and winning everything in sight.

The club made a start when they won the 1989 Brazilian national championship with a 1-0 away victory against Sao Paulo. The next step is to win the South American Club Cup.

While other clubs in Brazil seem to be selling off players as fast as they possibly can, Vasco have spent £2 million on assembling their current team – a fortune by Brazilian standards.

Acquisitions have included Tita from Italian club Pescara, Ecuadorian defender Holger Quinonez from Barcelona of Guayaquil, veteran midfielder Andrade from Roma, Luis Carlos Winck from Internacional (of Porto Alegre) and Marco Antonio Boiadero from Guarani, in addition to the well-publicised signing of Bebeto from Flamengo.

Added to the existing players such as Bismark and Acacio – all full internationals – plus the veteran ex-World Cup forward Roberto Dinamite, who has just returned from four months on loan to Portuguesa, and you see why the "Vascainos" are so optimistic.

Just as important, Vasco have one of the best youth sections in Brazil and this has provided the club with a group of young players who are capable of stepping into the first team if necessary.

On the few occasions that he appeared last year, 19-year-old Cassio proved that he could become the new Mazinho at left back. Twenty-year-old Sorato has the makings of a replacement for Bebeto. He proved it by scoring three of the most important goals in the national championship, including the winner against Sao Paulo.

Suffer

This youth policy, in which the club invest a lot of time and money, means that Vasco should not suffer in the same way as Flamengo did last year when they lost Aldair, Jorginho and Bebeto in quick succession.

That Vasco would lose stars was inevitable. The first, needless to say, is probably Bebeto, despite injury problems which wrecked his World Cup. Mazinho has been virtually sold to Italian club Lecce.

Vasco will naturally, receive truckloads of money in return and will be able to buy replacements but transfers in Brazil can be a long, complicated, frustrating business and they will need some good reserves in the meantime.

One thing Vasco will have to guard against is overconfidence. Before the national championship began last September, the general feeling among the directors and supporters was that the team would win the competition standing on their heads.

Expectations were so high that Nelsinho nearly lost his job after less than two months, even though Vasco were second in their group.

Vasco performed far from convincingly in the early stages of the competition, even though they were always in the top two. Apart from the pressure, the directors had shot themselves in the foot by inexplicably loaning Roberto Dinamite to Sao Paulo club Portuguesa. Roberto has been at the club since 1971 apart from a brief and unsuccessful spell in Spain, and despite his 34 years is something of a goalscoring machine.

The directors must have felt pretty silly as he started knocking in the goals for Portuguesa in his usual style and even sillier when Bebeto missed the opening games through injury – he was still recovering from his encounters with Orlando Aravena's Chilean hatchet men.

When Bebeto did recover, he still seemed to be pining for Flamengo, while the team's defence showed some alarming lapses with usually dependable Acacio in goal making some real howlers (or "frangos" – chickens – as the Brazilians call them).

Fortunately for Vasco the other teams in the championship were "at the same low level", according to Flamengo manager Valdir Espinosa, and this, together with a significant improvement in the final stages, enabled Vasco to qualify for the final against Sao Paulo.

In the final itself, Vasco gave their best performance of the competition, winning in Sao Paulo's Morumbi stadium with a goal scored by Sorato.

The title was the culmination of a process which has seen Vasco establish themselves as one of Rio's biggest two clubs. For most of their history, the club as been overshadowed by Flamengo and Fluminense. Both have won the Rio championship over 20 times, while Vasco have 16 titles to their credit.

The change in Vasco's fortunes began with the arrival of Sebastiao Lazaroni, the recent Brazil World Cup manager, in 1986. The next year, Vasco won the Rio championship with a 1-0 win over Flamengo in the final, Tita scoring the winning goal. Unfortunately, Tita was then sold to Pescara of Italy, some of the other players left and Vasco were a disappointment in that year's national championship.

But in 1988 Lazaroni managed to reconstruct a title-winning team that included Romario, Geovani, Bismark and Mazinho. With Geovani and Romario on both on top form, Vasco retained the Rio championship.

Best team

Lazaroni then departed for the petro-dollars of Saudi Arabia while Romario was sold to PSV Eindhoven. However, the base of the team stayed and under Zanata, Vasco were clearly the best team in the 1988 national championship. At the end of the second stage, they were eight points clear of their nearest rivals, which in most countries would have been enough to guarantee them the title.

Unfortunately, the next stage of the competition was played on a knockout basis with no account of the teams' previous records in the competition. So everyone started from scratch again and all the previous work went down the drain as Vasco were eliminated by Fluminense in a two-legged quarter-final.

Zanata left and in the 1989 Rio championship, the club changed managers twice and did not even reach the final. Geovani was then sold to Bologna and the directors decided to go on their spending spree, with Nelsinho being appointed.

Vasco was originally founded as a rowing club by a group of Portuguese immigrants, who named the club after Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama. The football began only in 1915 when Vasco merged with a Portuguese football team called Lusitania FC. The new club entered the third division of the Rio championship but it was only in 1922 that they reached the first division.

Vasco won their first Rio title the following year but they were then boycotted by the big clubs – at the time Flamengo, Botafogo, Fluminense and America – who formed their own association. But in 1927, the year in which Vasco completed construction of their Sao Januario stadium, they were re-admitted by the other clubs.

Vasco won another Rio title in 1929 but their best period came during the 1940s, a decade when they won three.

During the 1950s Vasco missed out on a chance to have Pele playing in their side. The club's president had gone to Santos interested in three other players. He was told that they were not available but was offered Pele – then 15 – on loan instead. He turned the offer down.

Pele did wear a Vasco shirt once, in a Vasco-Santos combination that beat Portuguese club Belenenses 6-1. It was also against Vasco – the team he supported as a child – that Pele scored his 1,000th goal, with a penalty in 1968.

Among the famous players to represent the club were Ademir, the top scorer in the 1950 World Cup, Barbosa, goalkeeper in the 1950 World Cup and Roberto Dinamite himself.

The Coach

ALCIR PORTELA: Aged 40. Lifelong Vasco player who retired to a post on the coaching staff and, after eight years' wait, was handed full charge after the departure in January of Nelsinho.

The Players

ACACIO Cordeiro Barreto: Goalkeeper. Aged 30. Born Campos. A Vasco veteran, having been signed from Serrano (Rio de Janeiro) in 1981. Played several times for Brazil earlier last year but was replaced by Taffarel following a disappointing European tour. Started the campaign nervously but regained his form as the competition wore on and guaranteed Vasco's win over Sao Paulo with three fine saves, one from a close-range header that Gordon Banks would have been proud of. Has won three Rio championships with Vasco and was second choice to Taffarel in the World Cup.

LUIS CARLOS Coelho WINCK: Full back. Aged 26. Born Portao. Signed for Vasco last August after seven years with Inernacional. A solid marker with attacking qualities, he began nervously but improved as the competition went on. Supplied the crosses from which Vasco scored three of their most crucial goals (all headed in by Sorato): the equaliser against Botafogo in a 2-2 draw which kept Vasco in with a chance of a final place, the winner in their last but one game against Corinthians and the decisive goal in the final.

MARCO AURELIO Cunha dos Santos: Central defender: Aged 22. Born Rio de Janeiro. Began his career with America of Rio in 1986 and was discovered by Vasco two years later. Somewhat slow but solid and very determined defender. Short on ball skills – at least by Brazilian standards.

Holger Abrahan QUINONEZ Caicedo: Central defender. Aged 27. Born Aguas (Ecuador). Signed from the Guayquil club Bercelona and a regular Ecuador international. Attracted Vasco's attention with some excellent performances in the Copa America, where he played as a sweeper, and also with his Bob Marley hairstyle. Alternated good moments with bad and has an alarming tendency to kick the ball straight up in the air rather than clearing it. Failed to reproduce his international form but still helped to tighten up Vasco's previously shaky defence. Very skilful player.

MAZINHO Iomar do Nascimento: Left back. Aged 23. Born Santa Rita (Paraiba). Discovered by Vasco at the age of 15 and a regular since 1986. Very good marker and an excellent attacker who crosses perfectly with both feet and has a useful long range shot. Made his debut for Brazil last year and performed outstandingly during the Copa America as a replacement for the injured right-back Jorginho. A member of the Brazil World Cup squad. Has won two Rio championships with Vasco.

Mazinho.

ZE DO CARMO Jose do Carmo Silva Filho: Midfield. Aged 28. Born Recife. Vasco's most superstitious player, he believes that he can only play well if he has watched a violent film before the game. Signed from Santa Cruz of Recife in 1988 and won the Rio championship with Vasco in the same year. Played in some friendlies for Brazil early last year but was dropped before the Copa America to make way for the European-based players.

BOIADERO Marco Antonio Ribeiro: Midfield. Aged 24. Born Americo de Campos (Sao Paulo). Another player signed in August, from Guarani. Previously played for Botafogo of Riberao Preto, the club with which Socrates began his career. Good long-range passer and dribbler and possesses a powerful shot but rather individualistic. His hobby is riding bucking broncos.

BISMARCK Barreto Faria: Attacking midfielder. Aged 20. Born Sao Goncalo. Another product of Vasco's junior divisions, having joined the club at 13. Has been a first-team regular since the age of 17. He was voted the best player at the World Youth Cup in Saudi Arabia last year and followed this up by playing for Brazil's senior side in some friendlies at the age of 19. Like Ze do Carmo, he had to make way for the "Europeans" but unlike Ze do Carmo he kept his place in the squad. His club form fell away after Saudi Arabia performance but improved during the Copa Uniao and he finished with eight goals. Not fast, but has good vision and is very creative. Also very religious - he attributes his World Youth Cup award to being "God's will".

BEBETO Jose Roberto Gama de Oliveira: Centre-forward. Aged 25. Born Salvador. Transferred to Vasco from Flamengo last August in a move that surprised even Flamengo's directors. Now regarded as one of Brazil's top players but out of luck at the World Cup after scoring six goals during the Copa America. He did not settle down easily at Vasco and was obviously affected psychologically when he had to confront Flamengo, a club where he spent seven years, for the first time. He barely appeared in the first half and was sent off early in the second for fighting. But he began to improve in the decisive games and ensured Vasco's qualification for the final with two goals in their last second round game - the first a spectacular volley.

Aguinaldo Luiz SORATO: Centre-forward. Aged 20. Born Araras (Sao Paulo). Another Vasco youth product having left his home town to join the club at the age of 15. Burst onto the scene two years ago with a goal in a decisive Rio championship match against Flamengo. However, he has still not achieved a regular first team place and played only six times during the 1989 Copa Uniao. He proved his value by scoring three important goals - including the winner against Sao Paulo - all headers from crosses by Luis Carlos Winck.

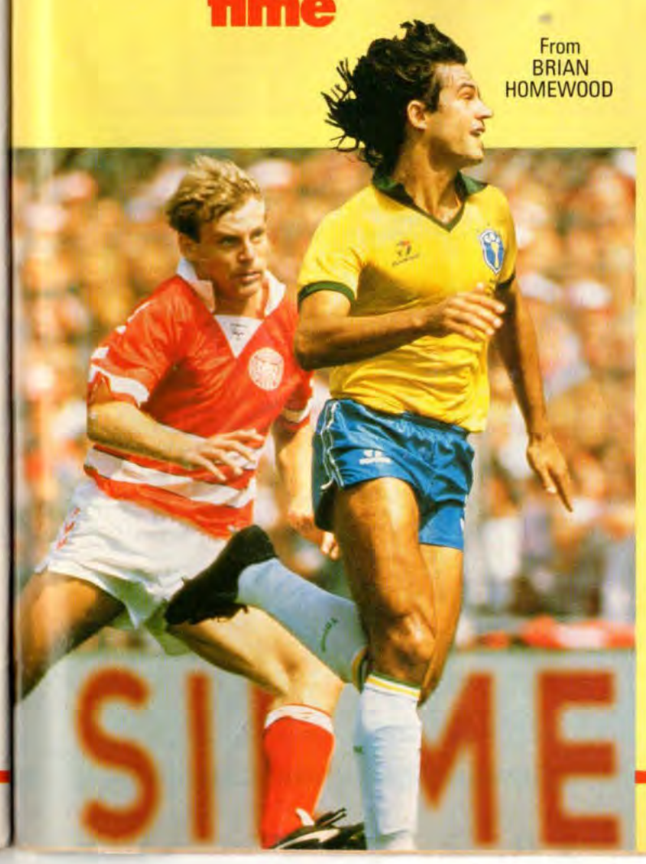
CASSIO Alves de Barros: Left back. Aged 19. Born Rio de Janeiro. Another Vasco product and hope for the future, he is looked upon as Mazinho's successor. Played 11 games, mainly as substitute. Good technique, confident and versatile.

WILLIAM Cesar de Oliveira: Midfielder. Aged 21. This was the first time he fulfilled his potential in the first team after irregular appearances in previous competitions. Similar to Geovani, the ex-Vasco, now

TURN TO PAGE 60

Andre Cruz makes up for lost time

From BRIAN HOMEWOOD



BRAZIL'S World Cup campaign might have ended differently if Andre Cruz had been in Italy.

Yet one of the country's best young defenders was denied regular football for more than a year – and saw his World Cup quest fatally jeopardised – because of an off-the-field dispute involving club directors, lawyers, agents and court injunctions.

The nightmare finally came to end when he was cleared to play for Flamengo at the start of this year. But by that time, he had already lost an important part of his career.

At 22, Andre Cruz still has a bright future. But it is impossible to know just how much the lost year will affect his career.

For a start it cost him a place at Italia '90. Although Andre Cruz had always been on the shortlist – he was regularly chosen by Brazil manager Sebastiao Lazaroni throughout last year.

Until the end of 1988, his career could not have been going better. Born in Santa Barbara d'Oeste in the interior of the state of Sao Paulo, Andre Cruz began his playing career with Ponte Preta, a club from the city of Campinas.

He represented Brazil at every age group and made his full international debut in 1988 at 19 in a 1-1 draw against Argentina.

At the Seoul Olympics he was a regular first-team member, demonstrating his talent as a defender (he can also play in midfield) and his powerful left-foot shot.

The problems began shortly afterwards. Ponte Preta were in the second division of the Sao Paulo state championship so naturally he wanted to play with a bigger club.

At the end of the year, he received an offer from Sao Paulo FC but this fell through. Andre Cruz blames the Ponte Preta president Lauro Moraes, who, he claims, "fixed my transfer fee in the clouds while at the same time paying me a junior's salary."

So he stayed at Ponte Preta but without playing.

"Play for the club for what? He keeps being called up and taken away from Ponte Preta," said Moraes, referring to the player's numerous appearances for Brazil.

The real confusion began in July of last year, when Flamengo approached Andre Cruz, and the two parties agreed terms. Andre Cruz however claims Moraes said he would let him go only to Vasco, despite an earlier promise that he would make it as easy as possible for Andre Cruz to leave.

Andre Cruz's father, Helio Cruz, who also acts as his agent, signed a contract with Vasco, while at the same time Ponte Preta were negotiating his sale to Italian club Como.

Two things were obvious: Andre Cruz could not play until the matter was sorted out and some sort of pact had been signed between Vasco and Ponte Preta. The evidence was that Ponte Preta were the only team from the second division of any state to be invited to play in the 1989 Brazilian championship. Was it a coincidence that Vasco director Eurico Miranda was also the CBF's director of football at the time?

Andre Cruz admitted that he reached the point of fighting with his father, saying: "I broke the living room table and left the house." It also became clear that he was not prepared to play for Vasco who, in turn, said they would do everything possible to stop him representing their arch-rivals Flamengo.

In the end Ponte Preta sold him to the Swiss club Chiasso, who considered loaning him back to a Brazilian club.

Andre Cruz was saved when Miranda resigned from the CBF and had a public row with Ricardo Teixeira, the CBF president, over the Brazilian championship fixture list. Lazaroni asked Teixeira to intervene in the battle over the player and the president promptly persuaded Chiasso to loan the player to Flamengo.

Injury added one more month onto his absence from club football but Andre Cruz finally returned in February in a Rio championship match against Americano. Two weeks later, he scored his first goal in a match against ... Vasco.

In the meantime, the only time he got to play was with the national team. Last year, he was called up on 24 occasions, played 13 times and scored the winning goal in a friendly against Italy with a 25-yard free kick.

Brazil could have done with Andre Cruz against Argentina.

Revenge at last for Sydney Olympic

FROM MIKE TICHER

SYDNEY OLYMPIC became the Australian National Soccer League Champions by beating Marconi 2-0 in the Grand Final. A record NSL crowd of 26,352 at Parramatta Stadium watched Olympic claim their first major honour after thirty years of frustration.

It was a reverse of the previous year's final when Olympic lost 1-0, and deprived Marconi of a third successive premiership.

Olympic did it the hard way. Having only scraped into the top five in the league on the last day of the season, they had to win three play-off games to reach the final. As minor premiers (i.e. League winners), Marconi started favourites in the final, but their sluggish performance rarely seemed likely to spoil Olympic's day.

Olympic broke through in the 35th minute when Alistair Edwards (recently returned from a spell in England with Brighton) finished off a fine move with a neat flick beyond keeper Bobby Catlin. New Zealand international Robbie Ironside settled the match with half an hour to go when he scrambled the ball home following a corner.

Olympic succeeding in neutralising Marconi's unusually subdued midfield pair of Ian Gray and Tommy McCulloch, and had the bite and inventiveness in attack through man-of-the-match Abbas Saad, Edwards and exciting young winger Steve Refenes.

For all their doggedness, Marconi sadly failed to reproduce the accurate, thoughtful football which at times had threatened to overwhelm the NSL throughout the season. The loss of key striker Zlatko Nastevski in January was the key element in their decline towards the end of the year.

It was an emotional climax to the season, however, for Olympic's fans, who swarmed on to the pitch at the end of the match in a good-natured celebration. Olympic's solid, if unspectacular performance was in stark contrast to the rest of a typically unpredictable season.

In debt

Only a few weeks previously, the club had to raffle a car in order to settle an outstanding tax bill, they are heavily in debt to the NSL, and the players were up in arms over money during the play-off series.

Olympic missed the double, however, when they lost 4-1 in the final to South Melbourne, coached by Ferenc Puskas.

NSL players too are in demand in Europe. Latest departures have been Melbourne Croatia's Zelko Adzic (to Dinamo Zagreb) and Marconi's New Zealand international Fred de Jong, who is joining Dutch club Fortuna Sittard.

Marconi's young goalkeeper, Bobby Catlin, will be going on trial with Chelsea during the summer, hoping to emulate his compatriot Mark Bosmich, who made his English League debut in goal for Manchester United in their last game of the season at the age of 18.

The huge crowd for the Grand Final (the second largest ever for a club game in Australia) and Olympic's long-awaited triumph concluded a tentatively hopeful first season of summer soccer for the NSL.

A 30 per cent rise in attendances was offset by the perennial bugbears of ethnic strife, poor facilities and indifferent administration. Two serious outbreaks of violence at games between Melbourne Croatia & South Melbourne Hellas and Olympic & Preston Makedonia received particularly widespread publicity.

These problems have been addressed in a recent report commissioned by the NSL, which has recommended club mergers, a more streamlined management structure and better promotion in an attempt to spread the game's base of support and diminish the domination of Sydney and Melbourne clubs.

Both the NSL and the Australian Soccer Federation seem likely to accept the report's main findings, which stopped short of recommending the franchising of clubs, an end to relegation from the NSL and specific rules aimed at dissipating ethnic influence.

Soccer is particularly conscious of the need to counter the recent revitalisation of rugby league in New South Wales, which was part of the rationale behind the switch to summer soccer.

Australian officials tried to lure Czechoslovak national coach and new Aston Villa boss Josef Venglos to the position of national team manager, vacant since the departure of Frank Arok in March.

Arok's former deputy (and a former coach of Sydney Olympic) Eddie Thomson, takes over.

Arok had signed a new three-year contract with his club, St George, and the ASF had stipulated that Australia's next team manager had to take up the position full-time.

Lost year

The ASF had come under heavy criticism from the Australian soccer press for failing to finalise the manager's position following the team's World Cup exit against Israel in April last year. The new manager has therefore effectively lost a whole year of preparation for the next series of World Cup qualification.

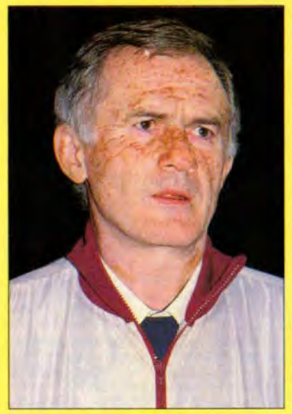
Arok, an inspiring, if controversial figure, had been Australia's coach since 1983, taking them to a play-off with Scotland for World Cup qualification in 1985, and to a celebrated 4-1 victory over Argentina in the Gold Cup in Sydney in 1988.

During his reign he has succeeded in instilling standards of professionalism and consistency unheard of under his predecessors.

STAR KIWI

OUTSTANDING performances in the Bundesliga and UEFA Cup for Werder Bremen earned New Zealander Wynton Rufer the 1989 Oceania Footballer of the Year award.

The previous year's winner Frank Farina, who has been a major reason for Club Brugge's Belgian league title triumph, was second – just two votes behind the Born-again Christian Kiwi.



The ASF wanted Josef Venglos (right) to take over from Frank Arok.

Introducing FIFA's newest members

Tahiti comes of age ...

BY PAUL MOON

THE NAME Tahiti brings to mind Paul Gaugin's paintings, the mutiny on The Bounty and idyllic holidays; not soccer. Yet, the newest member of FIFA has long been a force within its own region.

Tahiti reached the finals of both Oceania Cup tournaments contested to date – losing 0-2 to New Zealand in 1973 and 2-4 to Australia seven years later (after earlier defeating the Kiwis 3-1). In addition, it won the inaugural Oceania Youth Cup in 1974 and has on four occasions taken gold medals at the South Pacific Games (a competition confined to the smaller island countries of the Pacific).

Unfortunately, due to France's past reluctance to allow its overseas possessions develop separate entities, competitive experience has been confined to the SPG since 1980. Even Tahiti's friendly fixtures have been irregular and the 1-0 win over a Welsh FA XI comprised of English League professionals back in 1971 remains the biggest scalp collected to date in such encounters.

Until recent times, Tahiti showed little inclination to join FIFA even though it was just as entitled to gain admittance as Hong Kong and Macao; both of which are well-established in the international fold despite being colonies of Britain and Portugal respectively. Neither was the local game's lack of development a barrier to membership (as is the case with several other South Pacific nations).

The Ligue de Football de Polynesie Francaise has controlled soccer throughout the vast expanse of ocean called French Polynesia with admirable efficiency and all facets of the game are in relatively good health.

Tahiti, the territory's largest and most heavily populated island, dominates the domestic structure and there are few quibbles from the outer islands over the territory going into battle under the banner of "Tahiti".

Pascal Vahirua now starring in the French League with Auxerre.

Ten leagues operate beyond Tahiti and the champions of each of these, along with all 37 Tahitian League clubs, vie for French Polynesia's premier knockout competition, the Coupe de Polynesie, every year. The trophy, which was first contested in 1937, has yet to leave the main island.

The Coupe de Polynesie winners and the Tahitian League Champions also have access to the French Cup. Annually, they meet their counterparts from France's other major Pacific territory, New Caledonia, during a week long tournament. The winner of this then enters the French Cup at the stage of the last 64.

Twice Central-Sport, the major power in local competitions for over a decade, has gained success against French mainland opposition in the Cup though the odd disaster has also been experienced. Valenciennes' 12-0 annihilation of Central in 1979 was particularly painful.

No longer controlled by the French FA, Tahiti may be excluded from its competition in the future. That, however, will be a small price of pay for FIFA membership and eligibility to compete in the World Cup, World Youth Cup and Olympic Games now that soccer officials both at home and in Paris, realise being involved in the mainstream of international soccer is essential if Tahitian soccer is to evolve further.

Tahiti long ago outgrew the majority of its Pacific islands neighbours. In the South Pacific Games, it has administered some horrendous drubbings including 18-0 (v Solomon Islands, 1963), 30-0 (v Cook Islands, 1971) and 18-0 (v Tuvalu, 1979). The Tahitians' elevation to full membership of FIFA will give the beleaguered Oceania Football Confederation a little more credibility.

Surprisingly, very few Tahitians have graduated to French League football and only one can claim to have made a significant impact in it. Recruited from minor Papeete club Vaiuriri Mataifa in 1983, Pascal Vahirua has been a regular member of Auxerre's first division combination throughout the last three seasons. Just 24 on March 9th of this year, he is one of France's best young strikers.

However, Vahirua is not Tahiti's most revered soccer personality. That accolade belongs to Erroll Bennett.

Colossus

Now 39 years of age and only slightly less influential than when at his peak, Bennett has stood like a colossus over Tahitian and South Pacific soccer for the best part of two decades. Apart from a brief, unproductive, stint at the now defunct FC Paris in 1972, Bennett's entire career has been spent with Central-Sport. In its colours, he gained ten League Champions' and nine Coupe de Polynesie winners' medals and twelve times was League top goalscorer (including ten consecutive seasons). The Papeete policeman also played in all four of Tahiti's South Pacific Games winning sides, three as captain.

When Bennett joined the Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints in 1977, the Tahitian League changed its match days from Sundays to Saturdays, rather than have the Mormon's strict "no playing sport on the Sabbath" doctrine force him into hanging up his boots!

Bennett will, almost certainly, be included in the line up for Tahiti's first fixture as a FIFA member and, thus, surely become one of the few players to have made an official international debut in their 40th year!

... BUT NAMIBIA HAVE TO WAIT

NAMIBIA'S application for membership of FIFA, and with it a formal entry into international soccer's mainstream, has been delayed by the newly independent nation's fragmented domestic administrative structure.

Namibian soccer is controlled by five independent organisations – the Namibia Football Association (NFA), the Namibian National Soccer League (NNSL), the Amateur Soccer Association (ASA), the Central Namibia Football Association (CNFA), the Namibia Soccer Federation (NSF) and the Northern Namibia Soccer Association (NNSA).

The government-backed Namibian Sports Council, however, only recognises the NNSL and NFA and it appears certain that these two will eventually amalgamate to become the national ruling body or operate in tandem like England's Football Association and Football League; leaving the others (which are localised and/or limited in scope) to content themselves being "feeder leagues" or disappear altogether.

Super League

Founded in 1986, the NNSL quickly established itself as Namibia's premier competition and comprises one Super League and four regional leagues (Central, Far North, North and West).

Windhoek, the capital city, provides half of the Super League's 16 members – Orlando Pirates, Young Ones, African Stars, Chief Santos, Sorento Blues, B.S. Tigers, Black African and Golden Rivers, while the South African enclave of Walvis Bay has three representatives – Explorers' Eleven, Blue Waters and Eleven Arrows.

From the provincial towns of Khorixas, Otjiwarongo, Outjo, Rundu and Tsumeb come Robber Chanties, Life Fighters, Golden Bees, Cuca Tops and Benfica respectively.

Nowadays, Super League clubs dominate the four major knockout competitions; the Metropolitan Life Cup (staged in August), Mainstay Cup (September), Novel Ford Cup (June) and John Player Special Cup (July). As their names suggest, all of these events are commercially sponsored and the prize money they present (approximately 6,000 for the Mainstay Cup) is generous by African standards.

Little contact

Due to its links with South Africa, pre-independence South West Africa had little international contact and most of this was in the form of matches between NNSL representative selections and visiting club teams from the apartheid republic. In these, the home team generally acquitted itself very well.

Before their isolation, the South West African team were popularly known as The Desert Rats – a nickname which reflected the dominant roles, both on and off the field, then played by English speaking whites.

Today, though, blacks form a large majority on the pitches, in the stands and in the committee rooms while, as in South Africa, rugby union is the "European" population's sporting obsession. A "more indigenous" alias will probably have been adopted by the time Namibia makes its senior international debut.

That milestone will be achieved after an officially constituted national administrative body, in whatever shape it assumes, applies for membership of FIFA and, in the words of the Zurich based organisation's press officer Guido Tognoni, "Namibia has demonstrated to the Confederation of African Football it is able to administrate and play football according to the laws of the game."

EUROPEAN FIXTURES (AUGUST)

AUSTRIA

August 4:
VSE Egger St. Polten v Wr. Sport-Club
Foto Nettig Vienna v FC Baumit Admira-Wacker
DSV Alpine-ALAG v SK Rapid Wien
FK Austria-Memphis v SC Sparkasse Krems
SK Raika Sturm v FC Swarovski Tirol
SK Mibag Vorw. Steyr v SV Casino Salzburg

August 7:
DSV Alpine-ALAG v SV Casino Salzburg
SK Mibag Vorw. Steyr v FC Swarovski Tirol
SK Raika Sturm v SK Rapid Wien
Foto Nettig Vienna v WR Sport-Club
FK Austria-Memphis v FC Baumit Admira-Wacker
VSE Egger St. Polten v SC Sparkasse Krems

August 11:
SV Casino Salzburg v FK Austria-Memphis
SK Rapid Wien v VSE Egger St. Polten
FC Swarovski Tirol v Foto Nettig Vienna
SC Sparkasse Krems v DSV Alpine-ALAG
FC Baumit Admira-Wacker v SK Mibag Vorw. Steyr
WR. Sport-Club v SK Raika Sturm

August 18:
SC Sparkasse Krems v FC Baumit-Admira-Wacker
DSV Alpine-ALAG v VSE Egger St. Polten
Foto Nettig Vienna v SK Mibag Vorw. Steyr
SV Casino Salzburg v Wr. Sport-Club
FK Austria-Memphis v SK Raika Sturm
FC Swarovski Tirol v SK Rapid Wien

August 25:
SK Rapid Wien v SV Casino Salzburg
SK Raika Sturm v DSV Alpine-ALAG
VSE Egger St. Polten v Foto Nettig Vienna
Wr. Sport-Club v SC Sparkasse Krems
SK Mibag Vorw. Steyr v FK Austrial-Memphis
FC Baumit Admira-Wacker v FC Swarovski Tirol

August 28:
Wr. Sport-Club v DSV Alpine-ALAG
FC Baumit Admira-Wacker v SK Raika Sturm
FC Sparkasse Krems v SK Mibag Vorw. Steyr
SK Rapid Wien v FK Austria-Memphis
SV Casino Salzburg v Foto Nettig Vienna

DENMARK

August 5:
Ikast v Frem
Brondby v Silkeborg
B1903 v Naestved
Viborg v Vejle
Lyngby v Herfolge
OB v KB
AGF v Aab

August 12:
Frem v B1903
KB v Lyngby
Herfolge v Vejle
Silkeborg v OB
Viborg v Ikast
Naestved v AGF
Aab v Brondby

August 19:
Herfolge v Frem
KB v Naestved
Brondby v Viborg
Silkeborg v Aab
OB v AGF
Lyngby v B1903
Vejle v Ikast

August 26:
Ikast v Lyngby
Frem v Vejle
B1903 v OB
AGF v Brondby
Aab v KB
Naestved v Herfolge
Viborg v Silkeborg

FRANCE

August 4:
Nantes v Metz
Bordeaux v Lille
Marseille v Caen
Toulouse v Lyon
Cannes v Auxerre
Monaco v Montpellier
Saint-Etienne v Nice
Paris-SG v Toulon
Sochaux v Nancy
Brest v Rennes

August 11:
Nantes v Monaco
Caen v Sochaux
Metz v Bordeaux
Lille v Toulouse
Lyon v Marseille
Nice v Cannes
Auxerre v Saint-Etienne
Montpellier v Paris-SG
Toulon v Brest
Rennes v Nancy

August 18:
Bordeaux v Nantes
Marseille v Lille
Toulouse v Metz
Cannes v Caen
Monaco v Lyon
Saint-Etienne v Montpellier
Paris-SG v Auxerre
Nancy v Toulon
Sochaux v Rennes
Brest v Nice

August 25:
Nantes v Marseille
Caen v Toulouse
Metz v Saint-Etienne
Lille v Cannes
Bordeaux v Monaco
Lyon v Sochaux
Nice v Paris-SG
Auxerre v Brest
Montpellier v Nancy
Toulon v Rennes

August 29:
Marseille v Bordeaux
Toulouse v Nantes
Cannes v Metz
Monaco v Lille
Saint-Etienne v Caen
Rennes v Nice
Paris-SG v Lyon
Nancy v Auxerre
Sochaux v Toulon
Brest v Montpellier

ITALY

August 26:
Cup, first rnd, first legs:
Cosenza v Barletta
Fiorentina v Venezia
Reggiana v Como
Reggina v Modena
Cremonese v Mantova
Brescia v Salernitana
Verona v Palermo
Padova v Monza
Avellino v Taranto
Udinese v Casertana
Foggia v Lucchese
Ascoli v Giarre
Ancona v Messina
Pesacar v Catanzaro
Lece v Empoli
Triestina v Licata

HOLLAND

August 25/26:
SVV v Feyenoord
Sparta R. v Vitesse
Ajax v Willem II
FC Den Haag v Fortuna Sittard
Roda JC v FC Twente
RKC v FC Groningen
SC Heerenveen v FC Volendam
PSV v FC Utrecht
MVV v NEC

LUXEMBOURG

August 26:
Grevenmacher v Diff. Red Boys
Esch Fola v Bonnev. Aris
Beggen v Luxbg Spora
Luxbg Union v Esch Jeunesse
Niedercorn v Hesperange

August 29:
Diff.Red Boys v Esch Fola
Hesperange v Grevenmacher
Bonnev. Aris v Beggen
Luxbg Spora v Luxbg Union
Esch Jeunesse v Niedercorn

SWEDEN

August 1/2:
Gais v Halmstads BK
AIK v Hammarby IF
IFK Norrkoping v Osters IF
Malmo FF v IK Brage
Orgryte IS v IFK Goteborg
Orebro SK v Djurgardens IF

August 5/6:
Djurgardens IF v Halmstads BK
IFK Goteborg v Orebro SK
IK Brage v Orgryte IS
Osters IF v Malmo FF
Gais v Aik
Hammarby IF v IFK Norrkoping

August 12/13:
Malmo FF v IFK Norrkoping
Orgryte IS v AIK
Orebro SK v Gais
Halmstads BK v IK Brage
Djurgardens IF v Hammarby IF
IFK Goteborg v Osters IF

August 15/16:
Aik v Malmo FF
Gais v Orgryte IS
IFK Norrkoping v Halmstads BK
IK Brage v IFK Goteborg
Osters IF v Djurgardens IF
Hammarby IF v Orebro SK

August 19:
Gais v Djurgardens IF
AIK v Orebro SK
IFK Norrkoping v Orgryte IS
Malmo FF v Halmstads BK
Osters IF v IK Brage
Hammarby IF v IFK Goteborg

Marseille were at home to Caen on August 4th.

August 26/27:
Orgryte IS v Malmo FF
Orebro SK v JKF Norrkoping
IK Brage v Hammarby IF
Halmstads BK v Osters IF
Djurgardens IF v AIK
IFK Goteborg v Gais

SWITZERLAND

August 4:
Aarau v Servette
Grasshoppers v Young Boys
Lausanne v Wettingen
Lugano v Luzern
Neuchatel Xamax v Zurich
Sion v St.Gallen

August 8:
Luzern v Neuchatel Xamas
St. Gallen v Lausanne
Servette v Grasshoppers
Wettingen v Sion
Young Boys v Aarau
Zurich v Lugano

August 11:
Aarau v Luzern
Grasshoppers v St. Gallen
Lausanne v Zurich
Lugano v Servette
Neuchatel Xamas v Wettingen
Sion v Young Boys

August 18:
Luzern v Grasshoppers
St. Gallen v Aarau
Servette v Neuchatel Xamax
Wettingen v Lugano
Young Boys v Lausanne
Zurich v Sion

August 25:
Grasshoppers v Aarau
Lausanne v Neuchatel Xamax
Lugano v Sion
Luzern v St. Gallen
Wettingen v Zurich
Young Boys v Servette

WEST GERMANY

August 11:
Hertha BSC v FC St. Pauli
1.FC Nurnberg v Bayer Uerdingen
Bayern Munich v B.Leverkusen
Eintracht Frankfurt v Karlsruher SC
Hamburger SV v 1.FC Kaiersl.
1. FC Koln v Fortuna Dusseldorf
Bor.M'Gladbach v Vfl Bochum
Wattenscheid 09 v Werder Bremen
Bor.Dortmund v Vfb Stuttgart (prov)

August 18:
Werder Bremen v Bor.M'gladbach
Fortuna Dusseldorf v Hamburger SV
1.FC Kaiersl. v Eint.Frankfurt
Karlsruher SC v Bor.Dortmund
Vfb Stuttgart v Hertha BSC
Bayer Leverkusen v 1.FC Nurnberg
Bayer Uerdingen v Wattenscheid 09
Vfl Bochum v 1.FC Koln
FC St.Pauli v Bayern Munchen (prov)

August 25:
1.FC Nurnberg v Fc St.Pauli
Bayern Munchen v Vfb Stuttgart
Hertha BSC v Karlsruher SC
Bor.Dortmund v 1.FC Kaiserslautern
Hamburger SV v Vfl Bochum
1.FC Koln v Werder Bremen
Bayer Uerdingen v Bay.Leverkusen
Wattenscheid 09 v Bor.M'gladbach
Eintr.Frankfurt v Fort Dusseldorf (prov)

VASCO DA GAMA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 57

Bologna player earned a place in the final line-up.

TITA Milton Queiroz da Paixao: Forward. Aged 31. Born Rio de Janeiro. Returned to Vasco early in the championship after two years with Pescara. A quick forward with exceptional ball control, this year he has been hit by injuries which have kept him out of both the Brazil and Vasco teams. He played only seven games during the Copa Uniao.

Jorge Luis ANDRADE da Silva: Aged 32. Born Juiz de Fora (Minas Gerais). After a career with Flamengo that turned him into one of Brazil's most respected players, Andrade finally managed to get into the national team in 1988. He celebrated by scoring a spectacular individual goal in a friendly against Austria and going to the Olympic games. But his career took a meteoric fall with his transfer to Roma after Seoul. Left in the reserves, he was forgotten by the national team and when Vasco rescued him last August, he was unable to regain his previous form. He played 12 games before being relegated to the Vasco reserves as well.

TATO Carlos Alberto de Araujo Prestes: Left wing. Aged 28. Born Curitiba. Another player bought last August who has had difficulty securing a first team place. He rarely produced the form of his Fluminense (his previous club) days and was extremely unhappy about being dropped for the final and replaced by William.

Bayern Munich play Stuttgart on August 16th.

LEAGUE TABLES AND RESULTS

VIETNAM
FIRST ROUND
GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hai Quan	10	4	5	1	11	6	11
Dien Haiphong	10	4	5	1	8	5	11
Tien Giang	10	4	4	2	10	8	11
Cong An Hanoi	10	3	5	2	13	7	9
Phu Khanh	10	3	5	2	13	8	9
An Giang	10	3	6	1	14	10	9
Tong Cuc Duong Sat	10	3	5	2	12	9	9
Quan Khu 3	10	2	6	2	7	6	7
Cong An QNDN	10	2	5	3	7	7	7
Go Dau	10	2	1	7	5	15	5
Oto Hai Hung	10	0	3	7	1	20	3

GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Song Lam Nghe Tinh	9	4	3	2	13	10	11
Long An	9	4	3	2	12	11	11
Quang Nam Da Nang	9	3	6	0	12	7	9
Cong An Haiphong	9	3	3	3	12	9	9
Cong An TPHCM	9	3	3	3	10	7	9
Nghia Binh	9	3	4	2	8	5	9
Cong Thap	9	3	3	3	11	9	9
Than Quang Ninh	9	3	4	2	7	6	9
Quan Khu Thu Do	9	2	3	4	6	9	7
Cong Nghiep TPHCM	9	0	2	7	2	20	2

GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cang Saigon	10	6	4	0	20	7	15
Det Nam Dinh	10	5	3	2	15	12	13
Xay Dung Hanoi	10	5	3	2	12	11	13
Cau Lac Bo Quan Doi	10	4	4	2	7	3	11
Dong Nai	10	4	2	4	12	8	10
Cong An Thanh Hoa	10	4	2	4	12	13	10
Lam Dong	10	3	5	2	13	10	9
Cang Haiphong	10	3	3	4	10	14	9
Cong An Ha Bac	10	2	3	5	10	12	7
Quan Khu 7	10	2	3	5	10	14	7
Cong Nghiep Vinh Phu	10	0	2	8	7	24	2

SECOND ROUND
GROUP 1 Pen

	P	W	W-L	L	F	A	Pts
Cong An Hanoi	6	5	0-1	0	7	3	16
Long An	6	1	2-3	0	7	7	10
Cong An Thanh Hoa	6	2	1-1	2	8	8	9
Hai Quan	6	2	1-1	2	7	7	9
Tong Cuc Duong Sat	6	2	1-1	2	6	6	9
Xay Dung Hanoi	6	1	2-0	3	10	10	7
Cong An TPHCM	6	0	1-1	4	7	11	3

GROUP 2 Pen

	P	W	W-L	L	F	A	Pts
Dong Thap	5	2	2-0	1	6	3	10
Det Nam Dinh	5	2	2-0	1	7	5	10
An Giang	5	1	2-1	1	9	8	8
Tien Giang	5	1	0-4	0	5	7	7
Cong An Haiphong	5	0	2-2	1	7	8	6
Dong Nai	5	0	1-2	2	4	7	4

GROUP 3 Pen

	P	W	W-L	L	F	A	Pts
Cau Lac Bo Quan Doi	5	3	2-0	0	8	2	13
Dien Haphong	5	2	2-1	0	9	6	11
Cang Saigon	5	2	1-2	0	9	5	10
Nghia Binh	5	1	1-1	2	9	13	6
Lam Dong	5	0	0-3	2	3	8	3
Phu Khanh	5	0	1-0	4	3	7	2

SEMI-FINALS: Dong Thap Dien Haiphong 0-0 (4-3 on penalties)
Cau Lac Bo Quan Doi bt Cong An Hanoi 1-0
THIRD PLACE PLAY-OFF: Cong An Hanoi bt Dien Haiphong 2-1.
FINAL: Dong Thap bt Cau Lac Bo Quan Doi 1-0.
TOP SCORER: Ha Vuong Ngau Nai (Cang Saigon) 10 goals.
RELEGATED TO A2: Oto Hai Hung, Cong Nghiep Thanh Pho Chi Minh, Cong Nghiep Vinh Phu.
PREVIOUS WINNERS
1980 Tong Cuc Duong Sat 1985 Cong Nghiep Ha Nam Ninh
1981-82 Cau Lac Bo Quan Doi 1986 Cang Saigon
1982-83 Cau Lac Bo Quan Doi 1987 Cau Lac Bo Quan Doi
1984 Cong An Hanoi 1988 Cong An Hanoi

SUPREME LEAGUE
The following teams will make up the 1990 Supreme League:
Cong An Hanoi, Long An, Cong An Thanh Hoa, Hai Quan, Tong Cuc Duong Sat, Xay Dung Hanoi, Dong Thap, Det Nam Dinh, An Giang, Tien Giang, Cong An Haiphong, Cau Lac Bo Quan Doi, Dien Haiphong, Cang Saigon, Nghia Binh, Lam Dong, Quang Nam Da Nang, Song Lam Nghe Tinh.
The rest of the teams that competed in A1 in 1989, with the exception of the three relegated to A2, will make up the A1 division, along with 5 teams promoted from A2.

Hosam Hussan plays for Al Ahly.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Wasl	26	17	6	3	44	13	40
Al Shabab	26	17	6	3	48	25	40
Charjah	26	17	5	4	42	26	39
Bany Yas	26	12	8	6	40	27	32
Al Nasr	26	12	7	7	37	21	31
Al Ahly	26	12	4	10	34	26	28
Al Ein	26	9	9	8	36	26	27
Kalbaa	26	6	7	11	20	28	23
Al Jaziira	26	6	6	12	27	31	22
Al Khalij	26	9	4	13	23	30	22
Al Wehda	26	7	7	12	25	42	21
Ras Al Kheima	26	4	6	16	18	43	14
Al Shaab	26	3	6	17	20	43	12
Emirates	26	3	6	17	19	52	12

TITLE PLAY-OFF: Al Shabab bt Al Waslo 2-1.

KUWAIT
FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Jahraa	21	11	7	3	20	8	29
Al Araby	21	9	8	4	24	15	26
Qazma	21	8	8	5	22	17	24
Kuwait	21	6	10	5	18	17	22
Al Salmiya	21	5	10	6	17	18	20
Al Qadsia	21	7	6	8	19	19	20
Al Yarmooq	21	3	8	10	15	24	14
Al Nasr	21	3	7	1	12	29	13

SAUDI ARABIA
FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Hilal	22	15	4	3	33	7	34
Al Ahly	22	13	6	3	32	14	32
Al Nasr	22	10	6	6	29	18	26
Al Tai	22	9	7	6	19	13	25
Al Shabab	22	7	11	4	26	21	25
Al Qadsia	22	9	6	7	20	15	24
Al Ittifaq	22	5	10	7	16	16	20
Al Ittihad	22	6	8	8	17	20	20
Al Wehda	22	3	12	7	18	23	18
Al Riyadh	22	6	6	10	24	34	18
Al Nahda	22	2	7	13	10	36	11
Al Raed	22	1	9	12	8	35	11

LEBANON

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ansar	5	1	-	1	1	2	11
Neejmeh	6	4	1	1	14	5	9
Safa	6	3	1	2	7	6	1
Tadamon	6	2	2	2	6	6	6
Shabab Al Sahel	6	2	1	3	4	5	5
Al Salam	6	1	2	3	3	8	4
Shebibe Al Mazraa	6	0	0	6	0	13	0
Riyada Wal Adab	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Riyada Wal Adab had their results expunged for competing in a tournament in Jordan without the LFF's permission.

AUSTRIA FINAL 1ST STAGE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
FCS Tirol	22	13	8	1	44	21	34
Austria V.	22	14	3	5	50	30	31
Admira W.	22	13	3	6	58	38	29
Rapid V.	22	11	6	5	44	30	28
Sturm Graz	22	6	11	5	23	17	23
First V.	22	7	7	8	38	40	21
Austria S.	22	5	11	6	29	31	21
St. Polten	22	7	7	8	25	31	21
Kremser SC	22	7	6	9	32	33	20
Vorwarts S.	22	3	8	11	22	40	14
Wiener SK	22	4	3	15	19	46	11
Grazer AK	22	4	3	15	16	48	11

FINAL 2ND STAGE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tirol	36	23	9	4	78	37	38
Austria V.	36	20	5	11	70	46	30
Rapid V.	36	17	10	9	69	52	30
Admira W.	36	17	8	11	79	56	28
Sturm Graz	36	10	16	10	34	30	25
Austria S.	36	10	15	11	49	62	25
St. Polten	36	9	16	11	45	54	24
First V.	36	10	9	17	51	70	19

CYPRUS FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Apoel	26	18	5	3	46	19	41
Omonia	26	15	6	5	53	21	36
Pezoporikos	26	10	11	5	37	27	31
Aris	26	11	8	7	43	31	30
Apollon	26	11	7	8	43	28	29
AEL	26	8	11	7	32	31	27
Anorthosis	26	10	7	9	20	28	27
Paralimni	26	7	12	7	40	40	26
Olympiakos	26	6	11	9	32	35	23
Salamina	26	6	10	10	26	32	22
Apop	26	6	10	10	30	46	22
Aliki	26	6	9	11	27	36	21
Evagoras	26	5	9	12	24	41	19
Ethnikos	26	3	4	29	15	53	10

DENMARK 1989 FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
OB Odense	26	17	7	2	45	19	41
Brondby	26	17	4	5	52	26	38
Lyngby	26	15	8	3	48	24	38
Vejle	26	14	6	6	45	27	34
AGF Aarhus	26	10	13	3	39	22	33
B 1903	26	13	11	7	33	28	27
Silkeborg	26	17	11	8	31	29	25
Frem	26	9	5	12	34	38	23
Naestved	26	8	7	11	35	40	23
Ikast	26	6	9	11	28	43	21
AaB	26	5	9	12	30	39	19
Herfolge	26	5	6	15	17	45	16
B 1913	26	4	5	17	25	52	13
Bronshoj	26	4	5	17	26	56	13

FAROES 1989 FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
B 7	18	13	5	0	37	13	31
HB	18	8	6	4	46	30	22
B 68	18	7	8	3	25	20	22
VB	18	8	5	5	33	21	21
KI	18	8	5	5	36	32	21
B 36	18	8	3	7	23	26	19
GI	18	7	2	9	28	33	16
SIF	18	5	5	8	24	29	15
IF	18	2	6	10	11	30	10
LIF	18	0	3	15	8	38	3

Michael Streiter of F.C.S. Tirol.

FINLAND 1989 FINAL – 1ST STAGE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kuusysi Lahti	22	13	6	3	44	22	32
TPS Turku	22	12	8	2	37	17	32
RoPS Rov.	22	11	8	3	42	20	30
Haka Valk.	22	11	5	6	34	22	27
HJK Helsinki	22	10	5	7	28	20	25
Ilves Tampere	22	9	5	8	36	31	23
KuPS Kuopio	22	9	5	8	30	30	23
Reipas Lahti	22	8	4	10	44	42	20
MP Mikkeli	22	5	6	11	27	44	16
OTP Oulu	22	4	7	11	19	38	15
KePS Kemi	22	1	9	12	20	53	11
Jaro P.	22	3	4	15	25	47	10

CHAMPIONSHIP STAGE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kuusysi Lahti	27	17	7	3	51	23	41
TPS Turku	27	15	9	3	45	21	39
RoPS Rov.	27	12	10	5	45	27	34
Haka Val.	27	12	6	9	38	30	30
HJK Helsinki	27	11	7	9	36	28	29
Ilves Tampere	27	10	6	11	45	43	26

RELEGATION STAGE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
KuPS Kuopio	27	12	5	10	39	37	29
Reipas Lahti	27	11	5	11	56	48	27
OTP Oulu	27	7	8	12	31	43	22
MP Mikkeli	27	7	8	12	34	50	22
Kemi PS	27	2	10	15	27	66	14
Jaro	27	3	5	19	27	59	11

FINLAND CURRENT

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kuusysi	15	10	3	2	25	8	23
RoPS	15	9	5	1	20	9	23
HJK	15	7	4	4	25	21	18
Haka	15	6	5	4	17	22	17
KuPS	15	6	5	4	17	15	17
Reipas	15	5	6	4	26	13	16
MP	15	4	6	5	14	18	14
Ilves	15	5	3	7	25	24	13
TPS	15	3	7	5	15	14	13
OTP	15	3	6	6	10	18	12
KPV	15	3	3	9	7	18	9
Kumu	15	0	5	10	7	28	5

ICELAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Fram	6	4	1	1	13	1	13
Valur	6	4	1	1	11	5	13
KR	6	4	0	2	10	7	12
IBV	12	6	4	0	2	8	10
Vikingur	8	6	2	2	2	7	7
Stjarnan	6	2	1	3	7	12	7
FH	6	2	0	4	9	9	6
KA	6	2	0	4	6	10	6
IA	6	1	2	3	5	10	5
Thor	6	1	1	4	3	8	4

SOVIET UNION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
TSKA	11	7	2	2	18	7	16
Kiev	11	6	3	2	16	5	15
Dynamo M.	12	6	3	3	13	10	15
Spartak	11	6	2	3	22	12	14
Dnepr	11	4	4	3	12	9	12
Torpedo	10	5	2	3	10	10	12
Ararat	11	4	3	4	10	9	11
Shakhtior	11	3	4	4	8	12	10
Chernomorets	11	4	1	6	9	12	9
Pamir	12	3	3	6	10	14	9
Metallist	11	2	5	4	4	12	9
Minsk	11	2	3	6	9	15	7
Rotor	11	1	3	7	6	19	5

CANADA EASTERN DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Toronto	11	8	2	1	24	6	17
Montreal	10	5	0	5	11	4	15
Hamilton	10	5	2	3	19	13	13
North York	10	2	3	5	9	9	9
Kitchener	9	3	4	2	9	11	8
London	10	1	5	4	8	16	6
Ottawa	11	1	7	3	6	21	5

WESTERN DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Vancouver	11	8	1	2	33	11	18
Victoria	10	4	2	4	16	14	12
Winnipeg	11	2	6	3	7	17	7
Edmonton	11	1	8	2	9	29	6

1990 AFRICAN CHAMPIONS CUP PRELIMINARY ROUND:
Al Ittihad (Libya) v Olympic (Niger) 6-1, 0-2; MBC (Somalia) v St Louis (Seychelles) 1-0, 2-4; AS Sotema (Madagascar) v Botswana Defence Force XI 1-0, 1-2; Arsenals (Lesotho) v Deover Sundowns (Swaziland) 3-1, 3-0; Malindi (Tanzania) v Mukungwa (Rwanda) 0-0, 1-2; Inter FC (Burundi) v Petro Atletico (Angola) 2-0, 0-3; Asko de Kara (Togo) v ASFA Yennenga (Burkina Faso) 1-1, 2-0; Dragons Oueme (Benin) v Mighty Barolle (Liberia) 0-0, 0-3; Renaissance (Chad) v Stade Centrafricain (CAR) 2-2, 0-1.

FIRST ROUND
Al Ahly (Egypt) v Al Ittihad 5-0, 3-0; Esperance (Tunisia) v Stade Malien (Mali) 2-0, 1-0; AFC Leopards (Kenya) v St Louis 4-2, 3-3; Sunrise (Mauritius) v AS Sotema 4-1, 0-2; Nkana Red Devils (Zambia) v Express (Uganda) 3-1, 1-0; Ferroviaro Maputo (Mozambique) v Arsenals 1-0, 0-2; El Hilal (Sudan) v Mukungwa 4-0, 2-0; Dynamos (Zimbabwe) v Petro Atletic 1-1, 1-1 (Dynamos 5-4 pens) Ashanti Kotoko (Ghana) v Freetown United (Sierre Leone) 4-0, 1-1; Royal Armed Forces (Morocco) v AS Kaloum (Guinea) 4-0, 1-1; JS Kabylie (Algeria) v ASKO Kara 6-0, 4-0; AS Sogara (Gabon) v Etoile Congo (Cong) 0-2, 0-1, Diaraf (Senegal) v Ivuanyanvu National (Nigeria) 1-0, 0-3; Daring Club Motema Pembe (Zaire) v Africa Sports (Cote d'Ivoire) 1-0, 0-3; Raja Casablanca (Morocco, holders) v Mighty Barolle 2-0, 1-2; Racing Bafoussam (Cameroon) v Stade Centrafricain 2-1, 0-0.

SECOND ROUND
**Al Ahly v Esperance postponed; Sunrise v AFC Leopards 1-1, 0-3; Arsenals v Nkana Red Devils 0-3, 1-5; Dynamos v El Hilal 2-1, 0-1; Royal Armed Forces v Ashanti Kotoko 3-3,

WHY SOCCER SPIES EARN THEIR MONEY

Andy Roxburgh gives his squad the complete rundown on Scotland's next opponents. Nothing is left to chance.

BY KEIR RADNEDGE

SPIES are everywhere these days. Not the Cold War variety. But soccer spies. At every match, hidden in the crowd, is an anonymous figure taking notes for a future opponent.

That's one piece of soccer strategy which continental football taught the English game. England used to go out with the simple idea that it was up to the opposition to worry about them.

But thinking foreign managers, from Italy's Vittorio Pozzo in the 1930s to Hungary's Guzstav Sebes in the 1950s and, perhaps above all, Helenio Herrera in the 1960s, proved that a necessary part of match preparation is knowing the enemy.

Intelligent modern managers such as Josef Venglos, Franz Beckenbauer and most of the rest of their Italia '90 counterparts, followed that lead. Squad and team and tactical choices were all made with – to a greater or lesser extent – the opposition in mind.

But what is the spy looking for? And what does he do with his dossier? Scotland coach Andy Roxburgh let me into the managerial secrets. Now you too can play Soccer Spy.

Roxburgh lays down this checklist for the spies he sends out:

* Check the opposition's strengths and weaknesses. What have they got which will damage you? What have they got that you can exploit?

* Check each individual player. If they're a goal up some players will start to show off and won't do as well as they might. If they're a goal down, some players will 'disappear.' You need to know which ones.

* Check for any special tactical ploys. What do they do at corners? How does their game flow? What patterns of play do they favour?

* Check attitude. How do they respond to going a goal down? How do they respond when they have just scored? Roxburgh recalls: "Against France for five minutes after we scored we were anybody's."

* Check the opposition's reacton to different conditions. For example, how do they react to wet slippery grounds?

* Check the 'shape' of their team. Roxburgh says: "For example, do they keep their shape as well as, say, Sweden?"

* Before a major match, check out the opposition by video. Roxburgh says: "Sometimes we will analyse EVERY touch a team makes on the ball. That tells us about the different types of passes they use; what they do when they dribble the ball; all about their shooting; about their heading; their patterns of play. For example, in the qualifying round we analysed France this way. We saw that whenever they got the ball they would get it to Battiston and then take it from there. So we kept a man on him and the French got in a terrible state."

* Check the other manager or coach: how he will respond in terms of substitutions.

Substitutions

Having gathered all this information, what can you do with it?

Roxburgh says: "Only a small percentage of the information we gather is fed to the players. They need to know only the conclusions. What we do is show our players two ten-minute videos. One is what the opposition can do and how we can stop them. The second one is what they can't do and how we can exploit that.

"Mind you, you can study a player all you like – doing something about him is another matter. Against Yugoslavia in the qualifiers, we knew all about how dangerous Stojkovic could be with corners but they still scored from one."

Roxburgh was not surprised that most World Cup finalists undertook such thorough homework. He says: "Perhaps if we had been in the place of Brazil or West Germany we could have afforded to go out and let the opposition worry about us. But very few teams have that luxury. Scotland have been criticised in the past for not doing their homework. At least that is something no-one could accuse of us this time."

Scotland's pre-match analysis of France paid off when they beat them 2-0 in this World Cup qualifier in March 1989.

Villa get top marks for landing Venglos

But will the fans be prepared to wait for results?

BY KEIR RADNEDGE

JOSEF VENGLOS, new boss of Aston Villa, is the thinking man's football manager.

His educational background is such that an outsider, unaware of his soccer connections, might think he was coming to Birmingham to take up a lecture post at the University rather than the hottest spot in the region's biggest football club.

Villa fans need not fear the introduction of any cynical continental gamesmanship or the tactics of ultra-defence. Venglos, though his club management background might be termed limited, is a lover of good football. He is a sort of Czechoslovak Ron Greenwood. His teams may not have won a string of trophies but they have always striven to entertain the fans and honour the spirit of the game.

That pedigree has established Venglos as one of the favourite coaches with the world governing body, FIFA. He has run many coaching courses for FIFA in soccer's developing world and his CV includes lengthy missionary stints in Australia and Malaysia.

In the last decade many whispers have circulated that English clubs were interested in top foreign coaches but nothing ever came of it. In the mid-1970s Arsenal excited their fans when it appeared they were about to prise Miljan Miljanic from Real Madrid. But in the end Miljanic (surprise, surprise) agreed an improved contract with Madrid and the Highbury connection was dead and buried.

Two men most often connected with English clubs were Sepp Piontek and Sven-Goran Eriksson. Piontek, a West German international fullback in the 1960s, made a big impression as manager of Denmark, taking them to the semi-finals of the 1984 European championship and the finals of the 1986 World Cup, Eriksson is the Swede who led IFK Gothenburg to the UEFA Cup and then worked successfuly at Benfica and impressively – though comparatively unsuccessfully – at Rome and Fiorentina. Now he is back with Benfica, whom he led last season to the final of the Champions' Cup.

What prevented more direct interest in either man – or any other foreign coach for that matter – was the suspension of English clubs from European competition. That vastly diminished the career prospects of any ambitious foreign coach. Now the wheel is turned back with the arrival of Venglos – just in time, ironically, to lead Villa in the UEFA Cup against his fellow Czechoslovaks of Banik Ostrava.

To be exact, Venglos is not the first foreigner to manage an English club. After all, Uruguayan Danny Bergara is in charge at Stockport with Argentine Osvaldo Ardiles a great success at troubled Swindon.

But Venglos is the first 'continental' coach to take over an English league side. Interestingly he succeeds Graham Taylor with at least one career factor in common – neither was an international. Venglos, indeed, was one of only a handful of managers at the last World Cup not to have represented his country at senior level.

Skilful players like David Platt should develop even further under their new manager at Aston Villa.

Neither, for that matter, had Italy's manager, Azeglio Vicini.

Born on December 12, 1936, Venglos played ten years at left half for Slovan Bratislava but was permanently excluded from international opportunities because of the dominance of the great Dukla Prague halfback, Josef Masopust. Ironically both would later take turns as national manager, Venglos with far greater success.

After retiring Venglos completed his studies to qualify as a doctor of philosophy and he was also, for a while, head of the physical education department at Bratislava University.

But he could never resist the call of his first love. Venglos went Down Under for a spell in Australia which included managing the national team. He left an excellent impression. The Aussies entertained brief, vain hopes of enticing him back after the recent World Cup but to no avail.

Home again in the early 1970s Venglos took charge of his old club, Slovan. He guided them to the league-and-cup double in 1974, to the league championship again in 1975 and thus earned an appointment as national team aide for the 1976 European championship.

Czechoslovakia, with seven of his Slovan players on board, beat West Germany on penalties after a thrilling final in Belgrade.

Two years later Venglos was promoted to national manager after the departure of Vaclav Jezek and, in 1980, took Czechoslovakia to third place in the European finals in Italy. In the third place match they beat their hosts on penalties.

Czechoslovak fans were then bitterly disappointed when their men failed to go beyond the first round at the 1982 World Cup finals in Spain and Venglos decided it was time to move on.

FIFA made extensive use of his unemployed expertise before Venglos took up what was, until now, his only major position in western European club soccer. This was at Sporting Lisbon, one of the biggest clubs not only in Portugal but in Europe, but a club riven by political infighting.

Venglos's cool, educated approach to the game was not appreciated in Lisbon. Sporting wanted instant success not solid foundations first. But the parting of the ways was good news for Czechoslovakia, who had slipped into the European shadows under first Frantisek Havranek then Masopust.

Venglos was reappointed national manager with enormous success. He was the right man at the right time, intelligently able to channel the rising morale of the nation and his players into a superb team spirit just in time for the World Cup in Italy.

Czechoslovakia, runners-up in 1934 and 1962, achieved their best placing in 28 years when they reached the quarter-finals. Only a dubious penalty and an extraordinary expulsion of winger Lubomir Moravcik, for kicking off his boot, brought them to eventual defeat against prospective champions West Germany.

At the World Cup the Czechs played some of the most attractive and educated football. But then, no-one who knew Venglos could be surprised. That is the stamp his management style – as Aston Villa are about to find out.

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Argie bargie ... Italy 'keeper Walter Zenga is crowded out by Argentina's Claudio Caniggia and Oscar Ruggeri.